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THE

# GOOD NEWS.

A SEMI-MONTHLY PERIODICAL:

DEVOTED to the RELIGIOUS EDUCATION of the OLD AND YOUNG

## THE WELL OF WATER.

A SERMON PREACHED BY THE REV. W. B. CLARK, OF QUEBEC, AT THE OPENING OF THE SYNOD OF THE LATE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, AT MONTREAL, JUNE 4TH, 1861.

"And from thence they went to Beer; that is the well, whereof the Lord spake unto Moses,—Gather the people together and I will give them water. Then Israel sang this song,—Spring up, O well; sing ye unto it. The princes digged the well, the nobles of the people digged it, by the direction of the Lawgiver, with their staves."—Numbers xxi. 16-18.

The Jewish people, as a race, had nothing prepossessing about them; considered as a nation, they had no peculiar excellence to recommend them. They were no way distinguished above other nations for any superiority in arts, or in arms. They did not establish, like the Assyrians, or Persians, a mighty empire, and dazzle the world by the splendor, or extent of these conquests. They did not, like the Greeks, excel in science, or literature, or the arts, and transmit imperishable monuments of their genius to all future ages. They did not, like the Romans, excel in the science of government, and stamp the evidence of the practical, and common sense character of their mind, on great works of public usefulness, which have been transmitted to our times.

They were favoured by God, above all other nations, not because of any peculiar excellence in themselves; but because they were the descendants of Abraham His friend; and because He had chosen them as the depositaries of His truth, in the midst of a world given over wholly to superstition and idolatry. It is because of the peculiar relation, in which they stood to God, that their history possesses for us an interest so vastly superior to that of any other nation. Their history is the history of God's Church; and, in the inspired record of it, the veil is partially drawn aside, which hides the spiritual from mortal vision,

and we see the Divine hand at work, in regard to the affairs of men.

But there is another respect, in which the history of the Jews is of vast, and never to be exhausted interest to men. It is a history fraught with divine instruction to men in all ages. In it God teaches by events, the grandest moral and religious truths, just as men attempt to teach them, by parable and story. The Jews were a typical, or representative people, and their history, in all its grand, leading features, is symbolical or emblematic of something corresponding, in the spiritual history of man. Thus, while their wanderings in the desert were emblematic of man's pilgrimages through the wilderness of this life, their rest in Canaan was typical of the rest which remaineth for the people of God in heaven. And there can be no doubt, in the mind of any one, who draws his doctrines from the Bible, that many of the particular incidents in their history, were symbolical of corresponding events in man's spiritual history. "Now all these things," says St. Paul, with reference to some of the leading events in their history, "happened unto them for types; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."—Thus the murmuring and discontent of the Israelites in the desert, finds a counterpart in man's general dissatisfaction with his present condition, and ingratitude to God for the blessings which he enjoys. Thus

the poison infused into their system, by the fiery serpents, was emblematic of the ruin brought upon man by sin; whilst the providing of the brazen serpent, and the deliverance of the people by simply looking upon it, in faith, was emblematic of our salvation by looking in faith to Jesus.

I am aware that imaginative men have sometimes found analogies, where none are intended; there can be no doubt, however, that the brazen serpent was a type of Christ, for the New Testament speaks, with sufficient plainness, in reference to that.— And we have equal scriptural authority for believing that the rock smitten in the desert from which the water gushed forth, was emblematic of Christ. Paul says of the Israelites, that they drank of that rock which followed them all the way, and that rock was Christ. And if the smitten rock symbolized a smitten Saviour, the water that gushed from it was an emblem of the Holy Spirit, whose gift flowed from the death of Christ.

There is no emblem so frequently employed in Scripture, as water, to denote the Holy Spirit. Thus we find Jesus saying on the last, which was the great day of the feast of tabernacles, when He saw the Jews drawing water out of the pool of Siloam, and bringing it into the Temple with great ceremony, in a golden vessel, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."— And St. John adds, by way of explanation, "but this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive." We know then, from the teaching of the Saviour himself, that water is employed in Scripture as an emblem of the Spirit; and we find it frequently used in this sense.— It cannot therefore be thought strange, if we interpret the water spoken of in the text, which God promised to bestow on the Israelites, as emblematic of the Holy Spirit, I do not mean to say that the incident here recorded was not a real event in the history of the Israelites, but it was one of those representative, or typical events, which was meant to lead men to look beyond itself,— from the carnal to the Spiritual. It is one of those events fraught with instruction to men in all ages; and I shall, in humble dependence on the promised aid of the

Holy Spirit, employ it, for our comfort and encouragement, and direction on the present occasion. And

I. I would draw from it instruction, as to the duty of ministers of the gospel, in regard to the Spiritual edification of their people.

There can be no doubt that it is the grand, the distinguishing and the most important part of the duty of a minister of the gospel to conduct the worship of God. For this the most careful preparation ought to be made, that God may be glorified, and that it may be rendered profitable, and attractive to the people; and to the regular and due performance of this duty every thing else ought to give way. The ordinance of public worship was appointed by God. It is that by which He is most honored, and it is that which He most honors and blesses with His gracious presence. Thus when, through the instrumentality of Moses, He would perform the glorious miracle of bringing water out of the rock, He made him first gather the assembly of the people together, that they might witness it. Again, when He would give them water out of the sandy desert, he said unto Moses,— "Gather the people together, and I will give them water."— From these passages, as well as many others, it is easy to see the great importance which God attaches to the gathering of the people together, for the ordinance of public worship. When men are gathered together, they can be more powerfully impressed, and led to do, as bodies, what they would never do, as individuals.— When men are together as masses, feelings are contagious, and gather strength and intensity, as they pass from heart to heart, and it is proper that men, in their collective capacity, should give glory to God, and witness the gracious and glorious works which He performs for His people.

The giving of a plentiful supply of water, at this time, was necessary for the comfort, perhaps for the very existence of the thirsty multitude; but it was a typical act this, emblematic of God's giving the water of life to His people, when perishing for lack of knowledge; or, at least of the knowledge of Divine things brought home to their heart, and made available to supply the wants of their spiritual nature. That water is used very frequently in Scripture

as an emblem of the Holy Spirit, has been already shown. And that the act of giving water, on the present occasion, was symbolical of the bestowal of the gift of the Holy Spirit by God upon his people, is evident from the parallel fact of the smitten rock, and the water flowing from it, which we know from Paul, was typical of a smitten Christ, and of the gift of the Holy Spirit, which flowed from the death of Jesus.

From the circumstance then of God's commanding Moses to gather the people, before he conferred on them the water which they so much required, I would infer that, as a general rule, God would have the people gathered together before he confers upon them the gift of the Holy Spirit.—No doubt he sometimes confers upon his people the gift of His Spirit, in private, where, and when, and how He pleases; but it is generally in the great congregation, that the gift of the Holy Spirit is poured out in rich effusion; and where great revivals of religion begin. God would have the people gathered together now, as in the days of Moses, before He confers great Spiritual blessings upon them. I do not mean to say that the mere gathering together of crowds to engage in public worship, is of itself enough to ensure the outpouring of the Spirit upon them; but this I do say, that the gathering of the people together for this purpose, is an arrangement which God Himself has made, and without which, in the ordinary course of things, no man's ministry will be successful. It is when large multitudes of people are gathered together that God is most honoured, and Divine truth likely to come home to the heart, with the greatest power.

Hence ministers ought to use all legitimate means, with a view to gather their people together. And it is certain that, if they fail in this, they will fail in the grand object of the Christian ministry. The want of success in the pulpit is the want of success altogether. The grand distinctive feature of the Presbyterian school is instructive, rather than ritualistic. And this I believe to be the grand distinctive feature of the New Testament church. The truth is the instrument which the Spirit employs in converting, sanctifying and comforting the soul; and hence the grand and most

important duty of ministers is to present the truth, in the most attractive, intelligible and impressive manner to the mind. And if they cannot command respect in the pulpit, no abundance in other labors will make up for this defect. It is common enough to hear people declaring that pulpit labor is the least part of a minister's work. This is a mistake. The pulpit is the grand scene of a minister's labor. And pulpit labor, with the necessary preparation for it, in prayer and study, is the chief and by far the most important part of a minister's work. Let a minister neglect to make adequate preparation for the pulpit, and his performances there will soon become stale, unprofitable, and unacceptable. Unless there is a constant importation of fresh knowledge, and excogitation of fresh thoughts, he will soon expend all his stock, and sink into a driveller. And unless he seek to present the truth in new forms, and with fresh illustrations, and to apply it to existing circumstances, he will gradually become dull, and lose his power to attract, if he continue to minister to the same congregation. I do not say that the collecting of crowds is an unfailing evidence of ministerial success in the highest sense of the word; but it is so generally. The sheep at least know the voice of the true shepherd, and will follow him. And acceptance with the people is generally an evidence that God is smiling on the labours of His servant. It is the duty of ministers therefore to labor, and pray, that they may be successful in gathering the people; for it matters not what precious truths are communicated, if they are not present to hear them, and what impressions are produced, if they are not present to share in them. They ought not to neglect visiting them, in their own houses, and dealing with them in private, as they have time, and strength; but if the people insist on too much of this household work, they will starve the pulpit, to obtain a far less important article. I have said that the distinctive feature of the Presbyterian School is instructive, rather than ritualistic. This, however, by no means implies that it is not devotional; for though there may be less protracted devotional services, in the public ministrations than in some other churches, there is probably quite as much of the true Spirit of

devotion. And most earnestly would I insist on the necessity of much secret prayer, on the part of ministers, if they would be successful in gathering the people. They ought not only to be much in prayer for themselves, that they may be enabled to live near to God, and endure as seeing Him who is invisible; that their spiritual affections may be lively, their hearts holy and pure, and their lives blameless and exemplary, but they ought to intercede much in behalf of their people, and pray earnestly for the success of their labors. They ought to be much in study, that their sermons may be acceptable and profitable, adapted to the times, and suited to the wants, the tastes and capacities of the people. They ought to imitate the Saviour, in using images, drawn from surrounding objects, and in devising illustrations drawn from those things with which men are most familiar. If we thus by prayer and meditation, and diligent elaboration, seek to prepare profitable and acceptable discourses, and implore God's blessing on the delivery of them, we shall certainly succeed in gathering the people, and we may safely leave the matter of success in the conversion of sinners, and building up of believers, in the hands of the Great Head of the Church, who has promised that His word shall not return unto Him void.

There is just one other remark which I have to make, in regard to gathering the people, and preventing them from being scattered, when they are gathered; and it is this, that in all our intercourse with our people, we should treat them with courtesy and kindness. No doubt this will, upon the whole, ever flow from a heart filled with love to the people. And nothing but this will secure it: for there cannot come out of the heart what is not in it. But even where there is a kind, gentle, and loving heart, there may be a good deal of warmth of temper, and rashness of spirit; and, under provocation, this may betray a good man into the saying of things, which may damage his usefulness, mar his prosperity, and ruin his peace. It is important that we should practice self-restraint, at all times, but more especially in the pulpit; for harsh words, spoken there are peculiarly offensive. One rash expression uttered by Moses, that meek, and holy man of

God, was the cause of his exclusion from the earthly Canaan, and productive probably of great exasperation, and ill feeling at the time, "Hear now, ye rebels," said he, "must we fetch you water out of the rock." It was not merely the arrogating to himself and Aaron the power of giving water, when that was from God alone, but it seems to have been the harsh words—"Hear now, O ye rebels,"—that were so exceedingly offensive to God. It is quite true that these Israelites had provoked Moses exceedingly, and that they were really what he called them. "They angered him also, at the waters of strife," says the Psalmist, "so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes, because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips." But the language which he employed, was unworthy the place which he occupied, and calculated to exasperate the spirits of the people, rather than to lead them to repentance. The pulpit is not the place to hurl reproaches at the people, even though they may be deserved; and a congregation may be scattered, or a minister's usefulness, and comfort destroyed by one indiscreet and violent sermon. Remember that our object in the pulpit ought never to be to gratify our own indignant feelings, but to minister to the spiritual benefit of the people. Our object ought to be to forget self, and try how we can but accomplish the grand end of the Christian ministry—the glorifying of God in the conversion of sinners, and edification of believers.

II. I would draw instruction from the text, with respect to the duty of the people, in seeking to procure from the Lord an out pouring of His Holy Spirit.

It would appear that the Israelites were benefitted by the chastening which God administered to them in the wilderness.—Because of their unbelieving, dissatisfied and rebellious spirit, He sent fiery serpents among them, which appear to have occasioned much suffering and death. And when, through the miraculous interposition of the Lord, the sufferers were healed, by simply looking in faith on a brazen serpent, which He commanded Moses to make, and erect on a pole, they seem to have been deeply impressed with a sense of the Lord's holiness, and power, and goodness. And accordingly, when they were reduced

again to great straits, for want of water, we hear no more of their murmuring, as at Meribah. Doubtless, they prayed to the Lord, in their distress, and He graciously answered their petitions. And when they came, by divine direction, to the place, which was afterwards called Beer, from the well which was dug, and most probably miraculously supplied with water there, God said unto Moses—"Gather the people together and I will give them water." Now here, I would specially direct your attention to the unquestioning faith of the Israelites, their perfect confidence in the Divine promise, and the very peculiar song which they sung on the occasion. They had seen enough of God's power, during their wanderings in the desert, to convince them that nothing was too hard for Him to accomplish; and they had lately experienced such proofs of His compassion, and love for them, that they could not doubt His goodness, and willingness to relieve and benefit them. And therefore, when he promised them water in the desert, they did not for a moment doubt that water would be given; and manifested their faith in the song of joy which they sung on the occasion,—“Spring, up O well, sing ye unto it.” This song is to be regarded both in the light of a prayer, and a thanksgiving. So strong was their faith that, when the Divine promise was given, they regarded it as good as fulfilled; and, in the highly figurative language of the text, they apostrophised the well, calling upon it to spring up, and exhorting one another to sing unto it. And, however strange this language may appear to us, it was but a poetic mode of praying for the springing up of the heaven-sent water, and thanking God for His precious gift. And if they knew, which we think probable, that this water was emblematic of the Holy Ghost, you can see a greater propriety in their apostrophizing the well, and beseeching it to spring up. Regarding, as we do, this whole transaction as emblematic of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, this language as an address to the Holy Ghost, would be perfectly appropriate in our mouths. The expression—“Spring up, O well,”—would just be equivalent to—Come, O Holy Spirit, and the expression, “Sing ye unto it,”—would just be equivalent to, praise the Holy Spirit, for his enlightening, sanctify-

ing and comforting influences. Now, brethren, if the Israelites saw great and irresistible evidences of the Divine power, so have we, though of a different sort. If they experienced great, and most evident interpositions of the mercy, and goodness, and love of God, in their behalf, so have we. And if they had a gracious promise of the immediate supply of a pressing want, so have we. And therefore, if their faith in God's promise was unwavering, so should ours. If their prayer for its immediate fulfilment was expressed, in the most ardent, and confident terms, and they called upon each other to give thanks, even before the blessing was received, well may we take a lesson from their strong faith, and earnest prayers.

We, brethren, have no such want of natural water as the Israelites experienced in the desert, but how great our want of the water of life! How earnest then should be our prayers for it! How dry and parched are our own souls, and how withered, and unfruitful the vineyards which we are appointed to keep! But we have as precious promises, as ever the Israelites had. We have promises of an outpouring of the Spirit so copious, that it is compared to floods upon the dry ground, and of believers springing up, in consequence, even as willows, by the water courses. Has not Christ assured us, that even rivers of living waters shall flow from believers; and that more willingly than an earthly parent will give good gifts to his children, will our heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him? O, if the Christian people would but believe God, if they would but take Him at His word; and like the Israelites, in the strength of their faith, amounting almost to vision, call upon one another to praise God for the gift, even while they were supplicating it; then might we expect to see the Holy Spirit poured out in copious effusion here, as in other places, and the experiences of the day of Pentecost renewed among us! Faithful, affectionate, and soul stirring preaching is necessary, on the part of ministers, that they may gather the people and instruct, and edify them; but earnest, believing, and persevering prayer is no less necessary among the people, that God may give utterance to His ministers, and accompany their words with Divine power, and that He would visit us with times of refreshing, and revival from His own pre-

senca. And if the people would but do their part, and abound in earnest and believing prayer, in the closet, in the family, and at the social meeting, then might we confidently expect to see many a place that might be called Beer, because wells of salvation were opened there, from which the people drew copiously and freely of the water of life.

III. Let us now, in the third place, seek to draw instruction from the text, with regard to the duty of persons in places of influence and authority, in helping forward the great work of the Lord.

God had promised to give the Israelites water, on this occasion; but they must employ means, though apparently inadequate ones, for digging the well. Moses did not command the people to set too with spades and picks, and other suitable tools, to dig a deep and capacious well; but he commanded the princes and nobles of the people, with their staves, probably meaning their badges of office, to pierce the soil, when the water flowed up in abundance.—It was not merely that God wished the miraculous character of the transaction to appear, by directing the employment of means apparently inadequate, in ordinary circumstances, but by ordering the most distinguished among the people, probably the heads of tribes, and the seventy elders, to pierce the ground, and that with their staves of office, he seems to have wished to show, in this emblematic manner, for the instruction of the Church, in all future ages, that the rulers of the people ought to co-operate with the ministers of religion and the people themselves, in carrying forward the work of the Lord. If the staves which the rulers employed, on this occasion, were really their badges of office, this would seem to imply that princes and rulers ought to employ their official influence, as well as their personal efforts in seeking to advance the best interests of religion. It would be unwarrantable, I admit, to deduce a general principle, on a difficult and inportant question, from a figurative expression, or emblematic act, to say nothing of the fact, that what was becoming, and proper in a theocracy, like that of the Jewish state, might be improper, in the altered circumstances of the governments of modern times. The passage, however, *does* teach that it becomes

all men, however exalted their position, to take an active part in promoting the cause of true religion; and that it becomes us to abase ourselves, in God's sight, and consider the highest earthly dignities as nothing, in comparison of spiritual privileges.

There can be no doubt that this passage teaches generally, that it becomes all who are invested with authority, and leadership among the people, to set an example of effort, and diligence, and devotedness, in doing the Lord's work. And if so, well may the consideration of this passage stir up our elders, as well as ministers, to greater earnestness and redoubled efforts in carrying on the Lord's work. It was by the special direction of the Divinely inspired Lawgiver, that the princes and nobles of Israel digged the well; and so it becomes our elders and office-bearers generally, to set an example of diligence and devotedness, in doing the Lord's work; and of the consecration of what they most value to the promotion of His cause.—And if ministers, and elders, and people would all combine their efforts, and exert their energies, each in their several spheres, and in the way of God's appointment, in carrying on His work, we should soon see such a revival of pure and undefiled religion amongst us, as would comfort our hearts, and stimulate our efforts, and communicate to us a foretaste of heaven on earth.

It is quite true that God is sovereign in all His doings, and in nothing more than the bestowal of the gifts of His Spirit; but it is also true that He has appointed general laws in the spiritual and moral world, no less than in the material; and that on the uniform operation of these laws, we may count with as much certainty, in the one case, as in the other. One of these laws is, that if we earnestly, prayerfully, diligently and perseveringly seek moral improvement, and growth in grace, we shall attain them; and that in proportion to our diligence will be our attainments. It is no less true in regard to things spiritual than temporal, that the hand of the diligent maketh rich. God is sometimes found of them that seek Him not, but this is only in extraordinary cases, which it would be madness to count upon. The general law is, that if we ask, we

shall receive, if we seek, we shall find.— We may not obtain a great revival, accompanied with visible, and unmistakable evidence of the operation of the mighty power of God. But if we use the proper means, in humility and faith, and prayer, we shall experience a revival in our own souls, and witness it, in our congregations. The water may not bubble up in the desert, but it will fill the wells. Looking, however, at the prophecies and promises of God's word, at the great outpouring of the Spirit, which is taking place in other lands, at the earnestness so apparent in the minds of men, at the shakings of the nations, and the threatened overturnings of ancient systems of superstition and despotism, and the probable introduction, after a tremendous struggle, of a new and more glorious state of things, I anticipate still more copious outpourings of the Spirit of God, than any thing we have yet heard of, and I believe that it will be, because of our own unfaithfulness and want of effort, if we do not share in the rich, and gracious outpouring of the Holy Spirit's choicest influences.

Fathers, and brethren, we meet to-day, in very peculiar circumstances. The Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, as it now exists, is about to be constituted for the last time; but from its death will arise a new and more vigorous life. Another union between two branches of the great Presbyterian family has been agreed upon, and is about to be consummated. And this I believe to be an object, in entire conformity with the mind of our glorified Redeemer and Head. The unity of His church, not in spirit only, but in outward and visible manifestation, was a matter that lay near His heart, while He was on earth; and it is not less dear to Him now that He is seated on the throne of the Universe. In that wonderful prayer, which He offered up to His Father, on the night previous to His crucifixion we find these words,—“That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me.” From the expression,—“*that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me,*”—it is evident that it was a material and visible union, which He prayed for, such as the world could perceive and appreciate.

I do not doubt that God has overruled the disunion of the Church for good, just as He has brought good out of many evils, and made even the wrath of men to praise Him. Still the divisions, by which the body of Christ has been rent, are a sore evil; and as there is a blessing pronounced by Jesus on the peace-makers, so, methinks, there will be a special blessing on those who heal the divisions of Israel, and make up the breaches of Zion. It is a note-worthy and encouraging fact, that great spiritual good has resulted from those unions, which have hitherto taken place between different branches of the Presbyterian Church. Everybody acquainted with the recent history of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, must have remarked the vastly increased spiritual life, and energy which that church has manifested, since the union of her two principal branches. And it is that united church more than any other, which has recently been blessed with such an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, as has probably never been equalled, since the period of the reformation. Substantially the same thing may be said, in regard to the union of the Relief and Secession branches of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland. The most blessed effects have resulted from that union. And especially, an amount of missionary effort has been put forth by the united body, in comparison of which the feeble efforts of the two bodies, in their divided state, were as nothing. And we are warranted to expect the same blessed effects from the union about to be consummated here.

There have been times, when separations were necessary, when acts of disunion became a solemn and most painful duty, which were generally accompanied by great sacrifices, on the part of those who made them, and were felt to be tremendous evils, at the time; but these separations were like the abandoning of one's country, when its liberties are destroyed, and no hope of recovering them, through the cowardice or treachery of some who played into the hands of the enemy. But surely, there is no ground for those, who themselves, or their ancestors, abandoned the same church, at different periods, for substantially the same reasons, continuing in a state of separation from each other.—

The grand cause which has led directly or indirectly, to almost all the separations, which have taken place from the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, is the exercise of lay patronage. This is a thing not only without foundation in the word of God, but in opposition to its whole spirit and inconsistent with the continued prosperity of any church. And as this great abuse does not exist in this country, I see no principle, though there may be formidable obstacles,—standing in the way of a union of all the different branches of the Presbyterian family here into one body, independent of any foreign Church; and I can see such important advantages likely to result from this, that I think all good men should be willing to abate somewhat of their cherished prepossessions, in order to the accomplishment of such a blessed result. If it is good for brethren to dwell together in unity, in any circumstances, it is especially so in the Church of Christ; and if in any country, pre-eminently so in this, at the present time, where there is so much work to be done, and so few hands to do it; and where, in consequence of our divisions, there is a super-abundance of labor, in some places, whilst in others, the people are left to perish for lack of knowledge.

Perfect unanimity in regard to metaphysical points, in speculative theology, and minute details about Church order, and government, is unattainable; and to attempt to enforce this is to lay a trap for souls, and exclude men of tender consciences from the church, whilst no subscription to minute confessions of faith will exclude unprincipled and dangerous men. I do not make light of confessions of faith, or advocate the disuse of subscription to them. Painful experience has shown the necessity of them: But it were better that confessions were confined to the grand, fundamental, saving truths of the gospel, and the great leading principles of Church government. I fear that it has often happened that more attention has been paid to light in the head, than grace in the heart; and that, in dealing with candidates for the ministry, churches have too often paid more attention to orthodoxy of opinion, than sanctity of life, and devotedness to the Masters work.

It is a favorable sign of the times, that,

in the Colonies of Great Britain, there has been an auspicious commencement made, in drawing together the scattered fragments of the Presbyterian Church. In Australia and Nova Scotia, the good work has been already, to a great extent, accomplished; and here in Canada, the first instalment of it is about to be completed. And whether the rest is about to be accomplished at some future period, or no, let us be thankful for what has already been done, and feel this token of the Divine favor upon us, a stimulus to greater devotedness, and more hearty and unwearied effort in the Lord's work.

Now that so many of us are about to be united together, in the bonds of an outward connexion, let us watch, and pray, and strive, that we may be united together, in the bonds of true fraternal affection, and Christian fellowship; and in proportion as we carry on the work of the Lord unitedly and devotedly, may we expect His blessing upon our own souls, as well as upon our efforts. And of this we may feel assured, that the nearer we live to Jesus, the closer will we be drawn to each other. Engaged as we are in moulding the opinions, and consolidating the institutions, of what is likely to become a great empire, the work which we have to do is a sublime and soul-inspiring one; far too important for us to come down from the high ground, on which we stand and occupy ourselves, in perpetuating in this new country, the divisions which sprang up in the old. Far am I from ceasing to cherish the most tender affection for the beloved land of our fathers, with its noble men, and heroic deeds; but he is no enlightened admirer of the institutions of the old country, as he is no true friend of this, who would seek to perpetuate, in this new country, the ecclesiastical and political feuds of the old. Let it be our object, each in our several spheres, to do what we can to heal the divisions of Zion, and gather into one the scattered fragments of the Church of Christ; so shall we make sure of a blessing to our own souls, and be likely to see the pleasure of the Lord prospering in our hands. It is in this way, that we are likely to see the Spirit of the Lord poured out, in rich and copious effusion upon us. In this spirit of love, and effort, and expectancy, let us

pray,—“Spring up, O well,” and the probability is, that we shall have abundant cause to sing unto it; and to bless the Lord, that we see streams in the desert, and experience in our own souls, a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

### Stooping to Conquer.

‘STOOPING TO CONQUER’ will be sought for in vain amongst the maxims of the world. It is not a motto in heraldry, it is not a principle in commerce, it is not an axiom in science, it is not a proverb in society, it is not a tenet in politics, it is not a stratagem in war. Stooping and conquering are actions so dissimilar, that human philosophy fails to discern the intimate relationship with which Divine philosophy has invested them. This most sacred truth seems strangely paradoxical till heavenly wisdom comes to the aid of man, and then with strengthened vision he discovers it to be the inmost heart of all holy revelation, the governing principal of eternal conquests, the mysterious message which God has been and ever will be delivering to men and angels. The first publication of this Divine doctrine began with the fall of Adam. Alphabetical and syllabic were its first enunciations;—like a feeble dawning it brought joy to the early patriarchs, then it waxed more luminous under the gorgeous ritualism of the Hebrews, still more so from the palaces of the theocratic kings, and still more brightly did it mantle with the glory of life and truth the sermons and predictions of the later prophets. Silent intimation of it was given by Jacob at the ford of Jabbok, by Moses when he left Rameses and retired to Midian, by David when the cave of Adullam was his refuge, by Daniel when the lions were his friends, by Isaiah when he saw Jehovah dwelling in the contrite soul. Slowly but majestically does this heavenly plan of conquering grow into palpable possibility, until the Inhabitant of Eternity inhabited a manager; then, “Stooping to Conquer” was incarnated in Christ, and the chief end of the world was accomplished.

Strange that the world should have remained unmoved when at the very crisis of its history. For four thousand years had the culmination been in prospect, but at this simple manifestation of a truth so

glorious, the proud world was altogether heedless, though a star should gleam in ecstasy over the birth-place of the meek Deliverer, and the wide heavens should reverberate with the noiseless melody of angels. Even Christ’s own familiar friends were safely sceptical:—his knees held little children and his lips blessed them—he was homeless when the foxes and the birds were hotted—he became the guest of sinners—he did menial duties to his followers—he endured contradiction and reproach—he was bound; he was crucified, he was dead, he was buried, yet still the weak hearts doubted, until their fingers had sought out the nail-prints, and their hands had covered the spear wound in the risen redeemer, until from the slopes of Olivet he was seen ascending in triumph to his Father; then, not faithless, but believing, this glorious truth dawned on their minds, that the highest exaltation above all principalities and powers had its basis and sure resting-place in the deepest abasement. Nature, hitherto reserved and silent, now tells mankind that deep foundations give high hills, that long roots give tall trees, that narrow streamlets give wide rivers, that simple seeds give splendid flowers, that earthward sunshine gives heavenward life. Providence also yields her testimony—adversity is the road to affluence, affliction is the porch of glory, sorrow is the gate of joy, patience is the vanguard of success—and so throughout the realms of Nature, Providence, and Redemption, humility became the precursor of honor. Was not this a strange thing under the sun?

“Stooping to Conquer” was henceforth admitted into the belief and life of every earnest Christian, and the heroic self-sacrifice of the Gentile apostle had some noble imitations. But the imitations are scarce, and often painfully deficient. Human nature is loath to make itself all things unto all men; such submission having a savour of obsequiousness and drudgery, though to understanding hearts it is the highroad to honour and true greatness. From such obscure endurances human nature shrinks, and would prefer what has seemingly more power and glory. But the Cæsars and the Napoleons, and the Voltaires, perhaps the Spurgeons also, are grievously mistaken. Truth prefers secrecy to demonstrations, and to work in silence with clenched

teeth and nerved arms, is better than the most elegant vociferations or the most brilliant exhibition of genius. The lovely way is always the holy and honourable and most useful way. It has been trodden by the feet of Him whose voice was not heard in the streets; and what Christ has consecrated may be naught else than dignified and noble. 'Tis true such workers seldom become famous, but they are in right royal company, and they need care nothing though the world disown them. God's light-bearers are little known. Their goings are too noiseless for the gross hearing of the world. Silently and unseen, they carry the warm beams of the Sun of Righteousness to the ice-cold dwelling of ignorance and sin, and under the low lintels of out-cast orphaned souls they stoop lovingly and lowly with the Light of God. Slowly but certainly is the heart and the household impregnated with the vitality of heaven, till the dry bones silently stand up, penetrated and clad with the same gleaming glory, and they in their turn do the Christ-like office to the neglected and the desolate, and so God's army of silent stooping warriors is continually augmenting, until the conquest of the world be accomplished.

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### "LIVING WATER."

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"Living Water" implies the contrary of a stagnant pool. It is spring water as opposed to the water of a cistern. It is ever clear, purifying, refreshing, is perennial in its flow, and therefore aptly represents and illustrates the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the sinner's heart.

A city minister had occasion to go to a country village to preach on a certain Sabbath. On the Saturday evening, while taking a solitary walk, he met a little girl with a pitcher of water which she had taken from a spring. The minister accosted her, and with a pleasant smile asked if she would allow him to drink of this cool water, as he was very thirsty. She at once held up the vessel that he might quench his thirst. After he had done so, he thought he would like to give this kind little girl a short lesson. "Did you ever hear," he said, "about that living water of which, if people drink, they never thirst any more?"

She stared vacantly, and at once said, "No, sir; I never heard of that."

"Can you read?"

"No, sir; I was never sent to school. My mother cannot spare me."

The minister then sat down on a stone, and the little girl on the grass, and he explained to her all about the "living water" spoken of in the Bible. He told her about Jesus who came into the world that he might save sinners, by obeying and suffering for them; and then about the Holy Spirit who comes into the hearts of children and grown-up people, to make them feel their need of the Lord Jesus, and of what he did and suffered for them as suited to the case of every sinner. He told her farther, when this Holy Spirit comes into a child's heart' he abides, just to do there what this spring water does to the body when bathed in it, or when taken as a refreshing drink. These were new thoughts to the little girl. She was very attentive, and as the minister spoke very plainly and sweetly, she understood a little of what he meant. Before allowing her to go home, he taught her this prayer:—"O Lord, send me thy Holy Spirit that he may teach me about myself and about the Lord Jesus." He told her to creep into a secret place every day and offer up this prayer.

"Will God hear me?"

"O yes, he will hear you and answer you too."

He gave her a tract that her mother might read it to her. The little girl went home very cheerful, and anxious to tell her mother what the kind stranger had said to her, and what he had given to her.

It happened that in the year following this good minister was called to visit the same village, and it occurred to him that he would inquire after the little girl he had found at the well. Having found out her residence, he was surprised and grieved to find she was confined to bed, and evidently drawing near her end. She was under the power of a burning fever, the poor child could scarcely speak, but she at once recognised the minister who had so kindly instructed her at the well. She struggled to utter something—"I was afraid I

should never see you again before I died, and I did so want to see you."

"Why did you want to see me?"

"I wished to thank you for teaching me about the living water, and for the little prayer you made me repeat. I understand about the living water now. God has answered the prayer. I am happy. I shall soon be with Jesus, whom I love." Her strength failed her, and she soon thereafter breathed her last.

O how sweet is it to be dwelt in by the Spirit! May all our children be taught of him, like this little girl! May they learn in faith, to utter the prayer, and find it abundantly answered!

### SIN'S PORTRAIT.

Look now at sin; pluck off that painted mask, and turn upon her face the lamp of the Bible. We start; it reveals a death's head. I stay not to quote texts descriptive of sin; it is a debt, a burden, a thief, a sickness, a leprosy, a plague, a poison, a serpent, a sting,—everything that man hates it is; a load of evils beneath whose most crushing, intollerable pressure, "the whole world groaneth." Name me the evil that springs not from this root—the crime that lies not at this door. Who is the hoary sexton that digs man his grave?—Who is the murderess that destroys his life? Who is the sorceress that first deceives and then damns his soul?—Sin! Who with icy breath, blights the sweetest blossoms of youth? Who breaks the hearts of parents? Who brings gray hairs with sorrow to the grave? Who, by a more hideous metamorphosis than Ovid ever fancied, changes sweet children into vipers, tender mothers into monsters, and their fathers into worse than Herods, the murderers of their own innocents?—Sin! Who eats the apple of discord on home hearths? Who lights the torch of war, and carries it over happy lands? Who, by divisions in the church, rends Christ's seamless robe?—Sin! Who is the Delilah that sings the Nazarite asleep, and delivers the strength of God into the hands of the uncircumcised? Who, with smiles on her face, and honied flattery on her tongue, stands in the door to offer the sacred rites of hospitality, and when suspicion sleeps, pierces our temples with a nail? What siren is this, who seated on

a rock by the deadly pool, smiles to deceive, sings to lure, kisses to betray, and flings her arms around our neck, and leap with us into perdition?—Sin! Who petrifies the soft and gentle heart, hurls reason from her throne, and mad as Gadarene swine, down the precipice into the lake of fire?—Sin! Who, having brought the criminal to the gallows, persuades him to refuse a pardon, and with his own hand to bar the door against the messenger of mercy? What a witch of hell is it that thus bewitches us?—Sin! Who nailed the Son of God to the bloody tree, and who, as if it were not a dove, descending with the olive, but a vulture swooping down to devour the dying, vexes, grieves, thwarts, repels, drives of the Spirit of God? Who is it that makes a man in his heart baser than a beast; and him once but little lower than an angel but little better than a devil?—Sin! Sin! Thou art a hateful and horrible thing; that "abominable thing which God hates." And what wonder? Thou hast insulted his Holy Majesty; thou hast bereaved him of beloved children; thou hast crucified the Son of his infinite love; thou hast vexed his gracious Spirit; thou hast defied his power; thou hast despised his grace; and, in the body and blood of Jesus, as if that were a common thing, thou hast trodden under foot his matchless mercy. Surely, brethren, the wonder of wonder is, that sin is not that abominable thing which we also hate.—*Dr Guthrie.*

### THE BALLYMONEY LABOURER.

A labouring man in Ballymoney, when coming out of a state of "conviction," said to those around him, "Boys, what is the biggest wonder you ever saw?" He repeated his question, and then he said, "Oh, isn't it to see an old grey-headed sinner like me saved at the eleventh hour? Oh, you are young—you are in the first, you are in the third hour, and so on. Come, it's far easier than if you wait as I did. *Oh, sin's is a nail the devil drives into the heart; and when it gets rivetted, it's hard to pull out.*" This homely but forcible expression was the means of deeply awakening a minister's son who heard it.

## Stories from the Book.

## FOR THE LITTLE ONES.

"Thy bread shall be given thee, and thy water shall be sure."—ISA. xxxiii. 16.

Short sighted man thy fears allay;  
In Providence confide;

For all thy wants, from day to day  
Jehovah will provide,

'Tis prayer that sets ajar the doors  
Of his rich never-failing stores.

When Canaan dearth had stalked around,  
And food was hard to get,

In Jacob's ears, sweet fell the sound

*There's corn in Egypt yet,*  
Joseph, beloved, bewailed as dead,  
Had been preserved to give him bread.

When by the Red Sea's sterile coast

The seed of Abram were,  
Water from Horeb filled the host,  
And manna was their fare,  
And quails, that o'er the desert passed,  
Fell 'mid their tents in numbers vast.

When Zorah's boast—Manoah's son,

A dying conqueror lay,  
And with fatigue of battle won,  
Seemed almost borne away.  
The jaw-bone of the ass God gave,  
And water to his servant gave.

When wickedness in Ahab's days

Had spread his kingdom through,  
And to requite him for his ways  
Was neither rain, nor dew.  
To Chereth's brook the prophet went,  
Where heaven's fowls with food were sent.

When Zidon's widow gathered wood

To cook her scant supply,  
That she and son might taste of food,  
And then together die.  
Elijah caused her meal and oil  
To last, till rain had blessed the soil.

When Syria's armies, vain and proud,

Samaria sat around,  
Till king was clad in sack-cloth shroud,  
And death sole rev'ler found.  
God scattered wide Benhadad's band,  
And peace and plenty filled the land.

When in Bethsaida's desert were

Five thousand men in need,  
Five barley cakes—sufficient share  
The motley comp'ny feed.  
The Saviour with an upward look  
Increased it, and the whole partook.

Strange stories these to us appear,

But wonders yet arise,  
For man and beast, from year to year,  
His bounteous hand supplies.  
The hungry he will ever fill,  
His name's Jehovah-Jirah still.

DALETH.

Napanee, 10th July, 1861.

## A NAUGHTY THINK.

"Mamma," said Kitty, "papa calls me a good little girl, and aunty does, and 'most every body; but I am not mamma, good at all." "I am very sorry," said mamma. "So am I," said Kitty, "But I have got a very naughty think." "Naughty what?" asked mamma. "My think is naughty inside me," said Kitty. "When I was dressed to go to ride yesterday, and the carriage came, and there was no room for me, I went into the house, and aunty told you I behaved very good about it.—She said I didn't cry, or anything; but mamma, I thought wicked things, and I ran up stairs and lay down and kicked and kicked and kicked, I was so—so—mad," said Kitty. "I wished the carriage would upset, and the old horses run away; that's what I mean. It was a naughty think in me." "Well, nobody knew it," said John. "Somebody *did* know it," Kitty. "Who?" asked John. "God," answered Kitty.—"He cannot call me good, as aunty and papa do, Mamma, how can I be good inside?"

Kitty is not alone in asking that question. Many and many a one is asking it very sorrowfully. How can I be good inside? King David felt like Kitty, and he fell down on his knees and prayed this little prayer: "CLEANSE THOU ME FROM SECRET FAULTS." Secrets faults are in some sense the worst sort of faults, because, first they deceive others, for they are inside and nobody sees them and they deceive our selves for we are apt to think nobody will find them out, and if they are not found out it is no matter.

Was Kitty deceived? No, she knew they were not kept secret from God, and it troubled her. And when her mother told her of King David's prayer, she prayed that little prayer for herself and she prays it every day. "Cleanse thou me from secret faults," she whispered in her Saviour's ear. And the Saviour hears and answers this little prayer. As she offers it, she watches over her own heart, and when a "naughty think" comes into her bosom she fights against it. "Go away, go away," and asks the Saviour to help her to resist it. Go it *does*, and sweet peace comes and nestles in her bosom instead.—*The Child's Prayer.*

### TO THE ANXIOUS.

Our Lord says, "Look unto me, and be ye saved." He says, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." Have you looked to him as the only Saviour? Have you been drawn unto him by that sacred magnet, the attracting influence of his dying love? Do you know what it is to come to Christ as a poor, weary, and heavy-laden sinner, that you may find rest? Do you know what it is, and in a spiritual sense, to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man; that is to look unto Christ crucified as the great supporter of your soul, and to feel a desire after him, earnest as the appetite of nature after its necessary food? Have you committed your immortal soul to him, that he may purify and save it; that he may govern it by the dictates of his Word, and the influences of his Spirit; that he may use it for his glory; that he may appoint it to what exercise and discipline he pleases, while it dwells here in flesh; that he may receive it at death, and fix it among those spirits who with perpetual songs of praise surround his throne and are his servants forever? Have you heartily consented to this? And do you, on this account of the matter, renew your consent? Do you renew it deliberately and determinedly, and feel your whole soul, as it were, saying Amen, while you read this?

If this be the case, then I can with great pleasure give you, as it were, the right hand of fellowship, and salute and embrace you as a sincere disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, as one who is delivered from the

power of darkness, and translated to the kingdom of the Son of God. I can then salute you in the Lord, as one to whom, as a minister of Jesus, I am commissioned and charged to speak comfortably, and to tell you, not that I absolve you from your sins—for it is a small matter to be judged by man's judgment—but that the blessed God himself absolveth you; that you are one to whom he has said in his Gospel, "Your sins are forgiven you," therefore go in peace, and take the comfort of it.—*Dod-drige.*

### WORK WITHOUT WEARINESS.

"And let us not be weary in well-doing."—*GAL. VI. 9.*

Action is the destiny and the lot of man. All the conditions of his existence suppose his activity. It is so in his physical frame. The elastic foot is for speed; the firm, lithe limb for endurance; the arm, at once supple and sinewy, for toil; the eye and the ear for their revelries for sight and sound. It is so in his mental constitution. By the active exercise of the powers with which God has endowed him, he can classify objects and understand truth. He has a memory by which he can inherit the past; a regal imagination by which he can colonize and almost enact the future. It is so in his moral nature. There is a power of perception within him to distinguish between right and wrong; an instinct of worship which, however, he may brutalize, he cannot stifle; yearnings after a nobler life which neither debauchery can extinguish, nor murder wholly kill.—Moreover, God has made the vigour of the faculties, contingent upon their exercise.—The muscle will shrink if it be never strung. The moveless arm will stiffen into hopeless catalepsy, while

"The athlete, worsted in the Olympic games, Gains strength, at least, for life."

Man was not made simply to live, the mere passive recipient of external impressions, a lifeless harp upon which each fitful wind might play; he was made to act, to will, to influence, to become a Power, to be the living centre of ever-radiating impressions. His existence is not to be that of a zoophyte, the mere clinging of a helpless parasite to its guardian rock; it is to be a life, beauti-

ful and holy, beating with quick pulses of activity, adventurous with an energy of which insensate matter knows not, and finding in the rapturous doing life's very soul of joy.

But though doing is a necessity of all, well-doing is not now natural to any. We have lost the inheritance of moral manhood. A strange weakness has paralysed the sources of our former power. Distrust and alienation are the mildest forms of feeling in which we naturally think upon God; and so thorough is the spiritual decrepitude, so great the stoop and nil of our moral nature, that we can hardly conceive of a time when it was erect and healthy, and are almost disposed to think upon Eden as some fable of the classic olden time, or ancient linner's dream.

While this is the actual condition of humanity, there is hope in its future destiny, and in its present experience too, because Christianity has revealed her glad tidings of great joy. By the death of Christ, the accepted substitute and propitiation, provision is made for the transformation of the nature, and by the shedding forth of the Holy Ghost, the application of that provision is secured to the believing soul. It is quite possible, therefore, that an entire counteraction should be set up against the depravity of the Fall; well-doing may become, as it once was, not a casual achievement, nor a momentary cavalry, but the rule of every day, the native and constant forth putting of the clean heart and of the right spirit.

It is possible that many who did well should grow weary in well-doing. The exhortation depreciates this. Weariness in well-doing! How readily it creeps even upon the most vigilant of us. Who, has not felt its tendencies, and had to rise and shake himself, if, haply, the drowsiness might be removed from his soul. Weariless in well-doing! Under the dread spell of its inconstancy, fair plans have proved abortive, and generous youth has languished into premature age, and Christian consistency has come by a scar upon its beauty, and the edifice of Christian graces has been stayed in its erection, till the scoffing world, gazing from the unfinished masonry to the sluggish builder, says, "This man began to build, and was not able to finish."

The causes of this weariness are manifold,

and we may each of us find them for ourselves if we study the Book that is within. Was it sloth that overcame us? Did we shrink from the effort of continued resistance against our own insidious sin? Was it self-complacency that obtained possession of our hearts; that old serpent of vanity which whispered us into carnal security? Was it anger which seized us in its petulant grasp, because we were not appreciated by our fellows, and were mortified to find the hollow preference given to inferior men, because some coveted pre-eminence was denied us, and our efforts to do good were met only with prejudice or scorn? Was it respectability which waved us off from commoner fellowships, which bade us leave all personal toil to the hewers and drawers among the people, and which told us that we could condone for our forsaken labour by our willingness to direct and to scribe? Was it the spirit of indifference which exhausted our energies? Had we entered upon a work too high for us, which demanded sacrifices that our heroism could not reach, and imposed restraints from which our passion fretted in rebellion? Ah! how many are there who thus rest in luxurious arbours until they lose their roll, or lull themselves into disastrous, and well-nigh hopeless slumber, upon the world's enchanted ground!

But why weary in well-doing? The obligations which pressed upon us so forcibly in our early decision have not diminished in their importance or grandeur. The soul is worth as much. God's claims are as imperative. Eternity is as magnificent, and it is not farther off, but nearer.— Heaven has not withered from its eternal spring. Hell is not less certain and real. There is no change, save only in ourselves. The motives remain with equal nay, with greater constraint upon us, for there are fewer sands in our life-glass than when we first began. Oh, to cast off the weariness, and in recovered strength to go forth in the service of the Lord!

"Ye shall reap if ye faint not." The harvest is certain, and it is nearing. Every pulse approximates it. Every day is hastening its approach. Every Sabbath brings us nearer to the sound of the joy-ells, which, to usher in the eternal Sabbath, are ringing as for a bridal. Why be weary

now? Does the pilgrim halt when he is in sight of the shrine? Though the racer may be panting and breathless, surely he will press on when the goal of his wishes is before him. Courage! my flagging brother! the call is upon thee, hearken to it, and thine shall be the recompense of the reward.

W. MORLEY PUNSHON.

### THE SINNER YIELDING.

"If the Lord of heaven and earth do now look from the throne of glory, and say, 'What! sinner, wilt thou despise My favour and pardon, My Son, Thy mighty, merciful Redeemer, My grace and Spirit still?'—what can be the return of the poor abashed wretch, overawed by the glory of the Divine Majesty, stung with compunction, overcome with the intimation of kindness and love! I have heard of Thee, O God, by the hearing of the ear—now mine eye seeth Thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes. So inwardly is the truth of that word now felt, 'That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified towards thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God.'—(Ezek. xiv. 63.) But, sinner, wilt thou make a covenant with Me and My Christ? wilt thou take Me for thy God, and Him for thy Redeemer and Lord? And may I, Lord? yet, may I? O admirable grace! wonderful sparing mercy! that I was not thrown into hell at my first refusal! Yea, Lord, with all my heart and soul, I renounce the vanities of an empty, cheating world, and all the pleasures of sin. In Thy favour stands my life. Whom have I in heaven but Thee? whom on earth do I desire besides Thee? And O thou blessed Jesus, thou Prince of the kings of the earth, who hast loved me, and washed me from my sins in Thy blood, and whom the eternal God hath exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins, I fall before Thee, my Lord and my God; I here willingly tender my homage at the footstool of Thy throne. I take Thee for the Lord of my life. I absolutely surrender and resign myself to Thee, Thy love constrains me henceforth no more to live for myself, but to Thee who died for me, and didst rise again. And I subject and yield myself to

Thy blessed light and power. O Holy Spirit of grace, to be more and more illuminated, sanctified, and prepared for every good word and work in this world, and for an inheritance among them that are sanctified in the other. Sinner, never give thy soul leave to be at rest till thou find it brought to some such transaction with God (the Father, Son and Spirit) as this; so as that thou canst truly say, and dost feel thy heart is in it."—*John Howe.*

### FAMILY RELIGION.

Oh, it is not the long face. Away with the stiffened air, and the head bowed down like a bulrush! There it is, "the law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver"—out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh—"we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard!" Cultivate *singing* in your families—the singing of those hymns, and psalms, and spiritual songs. Let it be evident that your happiness centres in your religion. Let that be the atmosphere you manifestly live and breathe in. Let it be as Mary's ointment of spikenard, whose fragrance filled all the house where they were sitting—"let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt." And example also, translating, as it were, all you teach into daily action, into the things which are true, and lovely, and of good report—instead of unteaching all, and giving all the lie, by the things which are selfish, covetous, doubtfully truthful, unkind, earthly, sensual, ungodly. And government, too; for the Christian family is a little Church and State within itself; and the parent is a priest and king both, in his own house—"I know him," said the Lord of Abraham, "that he will command his children and his household after him." Only let your authority be of love, having plainly for its end the highest welfare of the subjects of it. Authority it must be, indeed, not advice merely; authority, not oblige always to render a reason of things enjoined, yet never wanting a reason; always having it,—the authority of Christian reason and Christian love.—*Rev. C. J. Brown.*

# THE GOOD NEWS.

August 15th, 1861.

## POSTAGE.

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Our subscribers will see that it is for their interest to avail themselves of the commuted rate. We are still of opinion that our publications are free according to law, but as the Postmaster-General is not of the same mind, our subscribers will find it more convenient to arrange for the commuted impost, than pay a cent each number.

## A Word in Season.

It is told of the venerable Dr. Waugh, of London, that he never admitted a member without inquiring what he could do for the Church, for society, and for the world. It is told also of the Rev. Robt. Phillips, a minister in Wales, that he obtained sufficient teachers for his large Sabbath School by making it a condition of admission to the Church, that they laboured with him in the Sabbath School especially, and if any were absent from their duties for two or three weeks, they were suspended from the ordinance till they could give satisfaction. These are refreshing instances of pastors alive to the interests of the Redeemer's Kingdom. They had a correct idea of the work to be done, and the way that workers should be set to the work, and not only did they enlist the co-operation of all that worshipped with them, but they directed and superintended their efforts. We should like to hear of many such pastors. We know there are some, but we fear there are not so many such instances at the present time, as there might be. It appears to be too prevailing a desire among pastors to have a large membership, without any great regard to its complexion. It appears also to be too prevailing an idea among the people, that all that is necessary to constitute them members of Churches, is a profession of

their faith in Christ, and the *not living* in open sin. Godliness according to them, seems to consist in doing nothing. Neither doing good nor bad. Living peaceable lives, and harming nobody. Now the sooner professing Christians are undeceived the better. It is not enough that they abstain from evil, they must also be active in doing good. It is not enough that they have heard the joyful sound that Christ Jesus came into the world, they must tell the glorious news to others, by means of personal exhortation, by visiting, by teaching in the Sabbath school, by distributing tracts and periodicals, or otherwise. And pastors should see that each one is occupying the field he is fitted for. Were they more devoted, more zealous, more practical than many of them are, each congregation would be a centre of Christianization, from which would go forth the genial rays of the Gospel, with the quietness, yet with the power of light till the dismal darkness of surrounding heathenism gradually dissolved, and the bleak and withering desert bloomed and blossomed as the rose.

## Hinderers of the Lord's Work.

*Who are they?* Not only the sceptic, the infidel and the open enemy. Not only the backsliders who brings a scandal upon the cause of Christ. Not only the mere professor, who has but a "name to live." But often the friends and the followers of the Lord.

They are to be found in almost every congregation, and are honest, truthful, and zealous. In their efforts they are practical, persevering and effective. In their prayers they are scriptural, fervent and unctious. In their desires and wishes, they are anxious for the spread of the Redeemer's Kingdom.— With their excellencies, however, they have defects. They may be narrow-minded, selfish, or proud, and this coming out in little things, does often much to hinder the Lord's work.— For example, a few individuals in a congregations may desire to build a church, establish a prayer-meeting, plant a Sabbath school in some convenient locality, or enter on some other department of the Lord's work. In the carrying out of their plan they calculate

on the co-operation and encouragement of such and such a one, but when they lay their scheme before him, because he was not consulted, it may be, in the arrangement of the plan, or because it did not originate with himself, his pride is hurt, he throws cold water on the scheme, and though he may not decidedly oppose, at the same time he does not decidedly favor, and this indifference acts like a wet blanket on the zeal of his more devoted brethren.

These hinderers are to be found also in every community and in every communion.— Good men no doubt, but so narrow that unless every scheme is just in accordance with the little, narrow, pinpoint of their conception they will not give any encouragement. These men may be the last in the world to do anything consciously that would hinder the Lord's work, yet they do it notwithstanding.

The Lord works in His own way, and His workers have to do their work in the way He wants them. If that success attends them that indicates that it is the Lord that directs the work, though the manner of proceeding is not in accordance with our preconceived notions, we ought not to hinder but to help. And what are we that we should hinder the work of the Lord? What are we that we should judge of the way in which He should move? We are but children, while He is the "Ancient of days," and "His ways are not as our ways," nor "His thoughts as ours."

#### "I WILL MAKE DARKNESS LIGHT BEFORE THEE."

This light is often thrown across our path in very unexpected seasons. "At evening time," the prophet says, "it shall be light;" at evening time, when appearances and experience would say, No light can come. And so we find it, Dark affections are often rolled away in a moment, while we are saying, No relief shall we ever have from them: or if not rolled away light breaks in upon them; we see their end and design; the Lord discovers to us why he has sent them. The same with divine truths and doctrines. We cannot understand them, they appear so mysterious; or we cannot bring our minds to receive

them, they appear so hard, so opposed to our reason or else to some parts of God's faithful Word; but we hear a sermon, or we read a book, or some passage of Scripture is brought with power to our minds and the mysterious doctrine, the hard saying, is understood and received at once. We see its meaning, we discern its truth. Instead of stumbling at it as we used to do, wishing it out of our way, we rejoice in it. The crooked thing is become straight, the dark thing is become light. Think of our Lord's disciples. Amidst how much darkness did they begin their course! how perplexed they were when he talked to them of the mysteries of his kingdom! When he spoke to them for instance of his approaching sufferings or the spiritual nature of his kingdom, they could hardly understand the plainest things he said. If ever men were spiritually blind, they were the men; and worse than blind—much that our Lord said offended them. And for three long years he suffered this to go on. But at last the darkness became light. In one week or little more after their Master had left them, these men were glorying in the truths at which they had before wondered. Everything had become plain to them. They were travelling along the way to heaven with light above and light within them, the rejoicing preachers of their Master's cross, that very cross of which for years they could scarcely bear to hear him speak. Here surely is comfort for you, brethren, who are mourning over your ignorance; and here is comfort for you who are battling with your prejudices. Ignorance and prejudice are nothing to the Lord. A few beams of his light let in upon them end them at once. And this light, this scripture says, you shall have. O seek it, hope for and expect it. It may be twilight with you now, or even midnight; but tarry thou the Lord's leisure, the promise says—It shall eventually be day and a bright one. "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."—*Rev. Charles Bradley.*

## PLAGIARISM.

Permit me to say a few words on this point. Let us start with a plain definition of terms. By plagiarism. I mean what Webster defines it to be—"the purloining another man's literary works, or (the) introducing passages from another man's writings and putting them off as your own." With this definition of the word in view, let me ask, Is it plagiarism to *make* the thoughts of another *your own*? it is not asked, Is it plagiarism to orally or in writing express the thoughts of another as your own *only from memory*? This, I grant, is one form of this justly condemned crime. But the question is, Is it plagiarism to incorporate the thoughts of another into your own *understanding*—to make them as truly your own by *meditation* as though they had originated with yourself? This, I feel, cannot be plagiarism in any true sense of the word.

There are three ways—and only three, as I conceive—by which one may "put forth" the thoughts of another in a writing or speech of one's own: either by placing the book, tract, or sermon before him, and copying the passage word for word; or by committing the paragraph to memory and reciting it; or by mastering the *idea* of the passage and then giving it forth in one's own words and way. The first two methods, when done without plainly giving the original source credit, is gross plagiarism, literary theft; the latter, I conceive, is as far removed from it as is the manly way of translating Latin by an independent study of your own, from that very questionable method pursued by some would-be manly sons of Alma Mater of translating by help of the "Pony" lying before you. According to this view, it cannot be plagiarism for a minister, after reading the sermon of another, the plan of which pleases him, to preach on that *same* plan even, always providing he has first thoroughly conceived it for himself, and then develops it in his own way. It is no more a crime in the minister to preach from the plan of another in the way mentioned, than it is in a carpenter who builds a house of his own *precisely* on the plan of another which he has seen somewhere else. Of course a man must exercise his common *sense* in this as in other things. For in-

stance, he is to know whether every part of that plan *he is capable* of naturally developing; there may be a thought there too great for him to grasp; he had better stop and think then whether, if assuming the lion's skin, the ass's ears will not stick out. But when a minister takes this plan, and states it, perhaps, only from memory, developing it in the same way, almost word for word, argument, illustration, and all, as pursued in the original source, then that is the barest faced falsehood a man could commit. And how a minister of the Gospel, with the least love of truth, can, without the keenest remorse, stand before his audience on a Sabbath day and "put forth" that sermon as his own, without telling whence he got it, is well-nigh inconceivable. Such men, if they are honest, are still very ignorant as to matters of conscience; or else, like false teachers, they are wolves in sheep's clothing.

I hold that the same is true in reference to appropriating the images or illustrations of another as your own. While never by copying or memorizing, they can always lawfully be made one's own by *meditation*. If not, then of what use is the study of the poets to a minister if he cannot make use of their *imagery* which he has made his own by meditation? how can he cultivate the illustrative power except by familiarizing himself with the best examples of this in the writings and speeches of other men? And by this familiarity will he not necessarily acquire a fund of illustration which he could not get rid of if he would? And here a question suggests itself. Is it any less a plagiarism to catch another man's *style* of illustrating than it is to catch his "sparkling imagery?"

If in any sense, to appropriate the latter as your own by meditation is plagiarism, then it must be plagiarism to appropriate the former as your own—appropriation which it would take a bold mind to promulgate now-a-days.

To preach in the way mentioned ought then to be considered just and fair. If it be not a legitimate way of preaching, then nine-tenths of the ministry must be doomed, so far as their mind are concerned, to eternal inanition. For the one who can preach well and eloquently without

leaning much on others, is your true genius. But not more than one in a thousand ministers, perhaps, has this divine gift. The most of them of talent—having talents ranging in degree from one to ten. What, then, shall these men of talent do—say the man of one talent, if he be not permitted to appropriate to himself, so far as he can, the burning thoughts of another by his own mental labor? Must he depend all his life only on what his own “scanty resources” furnish him?

The reason why we have so many dry, unintelligible, drowsy sermons nowadays, is that some preachers labor so little over the clear, brilliant, but weighty thoughts contained in these bodies of divinity and those volumes of sermons that now stand dust-covered on the shelves of their libraries.

Am I alone in defending the righteousness of appropriating another's thought to an argument, an illustration, or an appeal, — as your own by meditation?

M. Bataillon, one of the most eloquent of living French preachers, says in his “Art of Extempore Speaking” (p. 163); “But it is both possible and incumbent to have that other species of originality, which consists in putting forth no ideas except such as one has made one's own by a conception of one's own, and are thus quickened with the life of one's own mind. This is called *taking possession in the finders name*” and Moliere, when he imitated Plautus and Terence; La Fontaine, when he borrowed from Esop and Phaedrus, were not ashamed of the practice. This condition is indispensable, if life is to be imparted to the discourse; and it is this which distinguishes the orator, who draws on his own interior resources even when he borrows, from the actor who impersonates, or the reader who recollects the productions of another.”

Please mark those last words, “who draws on his own interior resources *even when he borrows*.” How this can be, will seem a mystery to the captious reader who in everything would be original in the absolute sense—true only of the real genius. The mystery will become profounder to such an one if reading thoughtfully the paragraph on pages 167 and 168 of this same suggestive volume. Persons of this description we would advise to fling aside the broadcloth they wear, and go for the

future clad in “plain homespun” garments of their own. Set up a loom in your own house, raise sheep in your own fields, card the wool with your own hands, and hereafter depend on no other living being for the clothes you wear. If you do, you are not original! You are a vile plagiarist!

A word in all kindness to the layman. Be careful how you charge your minister with this sin. First assure yourself by indubitable evidence that he is a *literal copyist*, and then expose his wickedness. But be careful how you charge him with this sin, because you have chanced to see the same *ideas* which he has presented to you expressed somewhere else. If you hurl this charge at him, you are only throwing stones at the glass house you live in. You yourself perhaps, have never yet originated a thought, the inking of which you did not get from another mind. Let the discerning hearer remember one point. The reason why sermons on the same text by two different minds will, up to a certain point, appear almost exactly alike, is that both minds develop the text in a *natural* or *logical* manner. But when you weave the skeleton and come to clothe it with the round full flesh of thought, then often you see the widest difference between them, because the *imagination* of each comes now into play; and this faculty in calling up incident, history, or similes or tropes from the arena of nature, hardly ever works the same way in many two minds.

I bless God for the books he has given me! I bless him that by prayer, by a study of his living Word, by thoughts of my own, and by meditation on the thoughts of others, by which I may *make* them my own, not like the thief who makes the god's his own by purloining, but like the honest tradesman who makes them his by purchase-money, by his prudence and industry, I may in my humble way, speak to the edifying of his church.—*N. Y. Independent.*

 Sickness should teach us these four things:—What a vain thing the world is! What a vile thing sin is!—What a poor thing man is! What a precious thing an interest in Christ is!

## A STRUGGLE WITH DIFFIDENCE.

A Christian writer truly remarks that a house silent as regards God's praise, "Looks rather like a sepulchre of dead souls, than a habitation of living ones."—A household whose daily round of employment is not commenced and ended with prayer is an unsafe abode for adults and children, as regards both their temporal and eternal interests. It is a hallowed scene to behold parents bowing with their children in daily recognition of God, and commending themselves to His care and guidance, amid the dangers of a sinful world; and it is difficult to conceive that parents can have a proper affection for their offspring, and neglect to set them the example of a constant trust in their heavenly Father.

The remembrance of a prayerless household may exert a ruinous influence through successive generations, chilling their spiritual emotions, and make them godless. There is a period of life when the example of parents make a deep and lasting impression upon the child; and if that is not in favour of religion, it is difficult to convince the man in after years that there is anything real in Christianity—remembering as he does, how those who were nearest to him, and who should have cared most for him, did not teach him, by daily example, his duty to God. But there are many heads of families who will admit all this to be true, yet so long have they neglected family worship, that they feel it is a course they are not able to commence now. For their encouragement and imitation we publish the following incident, which has been going the rounds of the [American] religious press. Let the reader follow this example of moral heroism. If the husband hesitates and delays, let the wife assemble the family, read the inspired lesson, and kneel in supplication to God in behalf of her little flock.

"He was a good man that Deacon L. He was a farmer; 'well to do, and always moral and upright. When about forty years old, he became deeply interested in personal religion. Naturally very, very diffident, he said little or nothing to anybody about his feelings. Months rolled on, and still he was anxious, distressed; while yet he had

regular seasons of secret prayer, read his Bible, and was doing all he could and ought to do, save *one thing*. He was the head of a family. He had a loving wife and four children, all impenitent, but they were his, and his conscience urged him to the duty of erecting the family altar. But the cross, O it was too great for his timidity! So it was put off, and new duties discharged in other directions as an offset, but he grew nothing the better nay rather the worse. At length one morning, in his field he solemnly resolved that that night he would, come what might, make the attempt, at least, to pray in his family. A seamstress was at his house, from whose ridicule and scorn he shrunk—but his mind was made up. And here I give his own language. "When I went home to dinner, she told me she wished to leave that afternoon—Never did I carry a person from my house so gladly before. She was now out of my way, and one great obstacle was removed.

Night came on, and I seemed to gain strength for my duty. But just as I was about to get my Bible, and tell my family what I intended then and thereafter to do, who should knock at the door but the youngest brother of my wife, a mirth-loving captious, young man, a member of college, just the last person in the world I then wanted to see. What shall I do!—what! what! my heart cried, and my agony seemed to be more than I could bear. But my vow had been made, and there could be no going back.

"I arose, got my Bible, and told them what I was about to do. My wife looked as though she would sink. My children looked one to another, at their mother, and at me, not knowing what was to happen. My brother-in-law seemed greatly amazed. But rallying all my strength, I read a psalm, and at length said, "O Lord"—and could not utter another word; and there was I, a great, stout man, on my knees, a *laughing-stock* for my dear family. There I was, I could not speak, and there my proud heart was humbled,—but there the heavenly Father met me, and my soul was filled with unutterable peace. When I arose, my poor wife was mortified, and hung her head to conceal her feelings. Her brother said nothing, soon retired and the next morning left for college.

"The family altar has not ceased to burn

with daily incense, though the priest thereof has ministered unto it for forty years.

"Now mark the result of that attempt at prayer, when the good man was, in his own esteem, a 'laughing-stock.' In about a week he received a letter from that brother-in-law student, which began with these words:—'Rejoice with me, brother Daniel, for I have found the Saviour, and that scene at your house the other evening God has blessed to the salvation of my soul.' This young man studied divinity at Andover, and when about to be licensed to preach the Gospel, was taken with bleeding at the lungs, and soon went to his rest. That wife, those children, and many others under the same roof, have found the Saviour through the instrumentality of this praying man. He lives still in a green old age, waiting for his summons to go higher.

"Be sure it is always best to obey God! Nothing is gained, but much is lost, by shrinking from duty. They are difficulties *overcome and conquered*, upon which we rise. The Christian is a soldier. He must not fear when executing a command.—The anxious lose, oh, how much they lose! sometimes the immortal soul—by failing to do the right thing, that *one* thing to which God evidently calls. Many a head of a family has stumbled at the cross of family prayer, and lost all. What though for once, or a hundred times, he may be a "laughing-stock?" It matters nothing, when such interests are at peril. The care of the soul is the great care. We can—or will—neglect it?"—*American Paper.*

### The Immutable Pledge.

"Because I live, ye shall live also."—John xiv. 19.

God sometimes selects the most stable and enduring objects in the material world to illustrate His unchanging faithfulness and love to His Church. "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so doth the Lord compass His people." But here, the Redeemer fetches an argument from *His own everlasting nature*. He stakes, so to speak, His own existence on that of His saints. *Because I live, ye shall live also.*

Believer! read in this "word of Jesus" thy glorious title-deed, *Thy Saviour lives*—and His life is the guarantee of thine

own. Our true Joseph is alive. "He is our Brother. He talks kindly to us!" That life of His, is all that is between us and everlasting ruin. But with Christ for our life, how inviolable our security! The great Fountain of being must first be dried up, before the streamlet can. The great Sun must first be quenched, ere one glimmering satellite which He lights up with His splendour can. Satan must first pluck the crown from that glorified Head, before he can touch one jewel in the crown of His people. They cannot shake one pillar without shaking first the throne. "If we perish," says Luther, "Christ perishes with us."

Reader! is thy life now "hid with Christ in God"? Dost thou know the blessedness of a vital and living union with a living live-giving Saviour? Canst thou say with humble and joyous confidence, amid the fitfulness of thine own ever-changing frames and feelings, "Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me"? "*Jesus liveth!*"—They are the happiest words a lost soul and a lost world can hear! Job, four thousand years ago, rejoiced in them. "I know, says he," that I have a *living kinsman*." John, in his Patmos exile rejoicing in them. "I am He that liveth" (or *the living One*), was the simple but sublime utterance with which he was addressed by that same "Kinsman," when He appeared arrayed in the lustres of His glorified humanity. "This is *the record*" (as if there was a whole gospel comprised in the statement), "that God hath given to us eternal life, and this *life* is in His Son." St. Paul, in the 8th chapter to the Romans—that finest portraiture of Christian character and privilege ever drawn, begins with "no condemnation," and ends with "no separation." Why "no separation"? Because the life of the believer is incorporated with that of his adorable Head and Surety. The colossal Heart of redeemed humanity beats upon the throne, sending its mighty pulsations through every member of His body; so that, before the believer's spiritual life can be destroyed, Omnipotence must become feebleness, and Immutability become mutable!

But, blessed Jesus, "Thy word is very sure, therefore Thy servant loveth it."

## Sabbath School Lessons.

August 25th, 1861.

### THE SAMARITAN CONVERTS.—JOHN IV. 26-42.

I. The Lord revealed Himself to the woman of Samaria, v. 26. Some wonder that He did so, when He forbade others to make Him known at so early a stage of His career.—But our Lord not having the same reasons for caution as He had among the Jews, who were disposed either to excite insurrections, or to accuse Him to the Romans, without any reserve told her that He was the Messiah.—The information led to the conversion of Mary, v. 39. No sooner did she learn this, than a fitting opportunity occurring, v. 27, she left her water pot, hastened into the city, v. 28, and proclaimed to the men, v. 29, that she had found Messiah.

II. Just as Christ had informed the woman who He was, v. 26, His disciples returned.—They wondered that He spake with the woman, v. 27, because she was a Samaritan, v. 9. Some suppose also, that they wondered because she was a woman, as the Rabbis despised the female as utterly without religious knowledge. In the Jewish Talmud it is said "No one salutes a woman," "He who instructs his daughter in the law is like one who acts the fool." How different is it in the Bible. In the Bible woman is exalted to her proper position. Daughters as well as sons are taught its blessed truths. Probably the disciples marvelled because He took the trouble to speak with evident interest to one whom as Jews they could only despise and hate.—But they asked no questions, feeling that in this, as in everything else, the Master had a proper end in view.—Mark vii. 37.

III. The disciples prayed Him to eat, v. 31. This request shows His true humanity. The disciples did not understand the exact meaning of His reply, v. 33. "His meat was to do the will of Him that sent him, and to finish His work." It was the Fathers will that He should labour, preach, work miracles, "fulfil all righteousness," in the midst of difficulties and temptations, and at length finish His work on earth by His sufferings on the Cross. He had an appetite and relish for His work, and found every part of it a delight and refreshment to His soul, because God was glorified and men were benefitted by it. As there was now opportunity afforded Him, of being employed in His work, He intimated that He would postpone eating till afterwards.

IV. The period of the year in which this conversation occurred was seed time. It was four months in Judea from sowing seed till harvest. Our Lord refers to this common

saying, v. 35. In His work, however, the harvest is even more speedy. In some cases it was immediate. No sooner was the seed of divine truth sown in some hearts, than it sprang up, as in the case of the Samaritans.—The Great Spiritual harvest—the reaping of souls for heaven was at hand, in connection with His work, which he was so anxious to finish, v. 35. *Look.* Our Lord would animate them by the bright prospect. Many of the people were thronging to Him from the city, at the report of the woman. He may have pointed to these, whose eager coming, and prompt believing was proof of the great field to be reaped as soon as the seed was sown; or He may have referred generally to the successes that would more and more attend His gospel.

The Lord Jesus is the Great Sower, by His work on earth. Those who so make Him known, as that the truth regarding Him shall be received, are the reapers. The sowers and the reapers shall mutually rejoice together, v. 34. Heb. xii. 2.

V. Many of the Samaritans believed on Christ from the testimony of the woman, v. 39. Many more, however, believed on Him after they had seen and heard Him themselves.—They entreated Christ to tarry with them, which He did for two days, v. 40, during which He taught them many things concerning their eternal welfare.

Learn 1. The world is the great field that now waits to be sown and reaped, and it is our duty to pray the Lord to send forth labourers, so urgently needed.—Matt. ix. 38.  
2. We may be sure of a harvest.—Gal. vi. 9.

September 1st, 1861.

### ABRAHAM AND ANGELS.—GENESIS XVIII CHAPTER.

I. Abraham was seated at his tent door in the heat of the day, v. 1. Three travellers appeared to him, v. 2. He was not aware at first who were approaching him, for he speaks of them as "three men." As they approached, he addressed the one who seemed to have the pre-eminence. Yet he treated them all with like hospitality. His cordial kindness and courtesy, affords us a fine example which we should aim at imitating. By being given to hospitality, he came to entertain strangers unawares.—Heb. xiii. 2.

II. The attention to Abraham's concerns would gradually show him whom he entertained. The specific reference to the promise spoken of in the foregoing chapter, would convince Abraham that one of His guests was the Lord Himself. Abraham is a much brighter example of faith than Sarah, for

though he laughed at the announcement of the promise, (Gen. xvii. 17,) his laugh expressed faith, joy and gratitude, whereas hers indicated unbelief. Her sin of unbelief led her to the sin of falsehood, v. 15. The Lord rebuked her, and would not suffer sin to remain upon her.

III. Two of the three left Abraham to go to Sodom, v. 16-22. The Lord remained and made known to Abraham what He intended to do to Sodom and Gomarrah, v. 17-19.—He did so because Abraham was His friend. Because on account of Lot he was concerned in the event. Because God would give him an opportunity of interceding for the criminals, and show him the reason of the impending destruction, but specially because God knew that Abraham would teach his children after him the sad consequences of sin, v. 19. God approves of the faithful discharge of parental duty, and the cheerful submission of parents and children to the commands of those placed over them.

IV. Abraham's heart was moved with pity and tender compassion when he heard of the intended destruction. He "drew near" to plead for them, v. 23. He pled his own revealed character, v. 25. Mark the humility of Abraham, v. 27-31. Mark also the persevering importunity of Abraham, (Luke xviii. 7-8.) Mark further, his quietness after exhausting his pleas before God, v. 33.

V. The city of Sodom would have been saved had there been "ten righteous" men in it, v. 32. Thus the wicked are greatly indebted to the Godly around them, whom they despise.

Learn 1. That hospitality is a duty,—Rom. xii. 13; Titus i. 8; 1 Pet. iv. 9.

2. That Abraham in his intercession furnishes a bright illustration of the character and work of Jesus,—Luke xix. 41; Heb. vii. 25.

September 8th, 1861.

### THE HEALING OF THE NOBLEMAN'S SON,—JOHN iv. 42-54.

I. Jesus having tarried two days in Samaria departed into Galilee, v. 43. Being undervalued in His own district of country, v. 44. He went to another district, v. 45. It is the general opinion that Nazareth and its neighbourhood are here called "His own country," and that this is assigned as the reason, why He went by another road to Cana, instead of going to Nazareth to reside, or even taking that city in His way; for Cana lay north of Nazareth. The Galileans received him.—While the Pharisees and others were hardened

by His miracles, the poor people of Galilee saw His glory through them.

II. When Jesus reached Cana of Galilee, a nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum, came to see Him, v. 47. Capernaum was some distance from Cana, but when men are in earnest they overcome difficulties, Luke xix. 4. *Come out of Judea.* This seems to imply that he had heard of our Lord's miracles at Jerusalem, and perhaps had been at the feast, v. 45, and seen what He had done there. *Come down.* The nobleman seems to have thought it necessary that Jesus should go to Capernaum to work the miracle. In this he showed low views of Christ.

Those who inhabit the upper ranks are subject to disease and death as well as others, all being sinners. But it is well when trials bring a man to Jesus, (Isa. xxvi. 16.)

III. This nobleman had faith in Jesus, though it was weak. His faith was evidenced by his coming to Christ, and by his urging his suit, but its weakness was seen in thinking it was necessary for Christ to go down to Capernaum ere He could cure his son. *Except ye see, &c.* The Samaritans believed without a miracle, but he required a miracle to strengthen and deepen his faith. The Lord did sometimes work miracles to arrest attention, to confirm the faith of men, and to render those inexcusable who believe not, (Matt. vii. 26-27; John xv. 24.)

The weakness of the nobleman's faith is further illustrated in the expression *come down ere my child die.* He seemed to think that if the child should die the case would be hopeless. Much less did he think that Christ would raise up his child after death.

IV. Christ met him while yet a great way off, and strengthened his faith by prompt dealing. The Centurion, (Matt. viii. 8,) asked the Lord to speak the word only and He offered to go down to the house. In this case where the weak faith of the applicant requires Him to go down to the house, He speaks the word only. The nobleman believed the word of Jesus, v. 50, and when His word was fulfilled, v. 51-53, his whole house believed on Jesus.

Learn 1. Christ encourages the weakest faith, so that none need hold back for more correct feelings.

2. Christ may answer our prayers, but not in the manner we desire.

3. We are to believe Christ's word, however contrary it may be to our understanding.

4. It is often by sickness in the family that a whole household is brought to God.

5. God honors parental piety and loves family religion. A parents faith is thus often accompanied or followed by that of his own house.

## THE BLACK SAXONS.

BY MRS. LYDIA MARIA CHILD.

TYRANTS are but the spawn of ignorance,  
 Begotten by the slaves they trample on;  
 Who, could they win the glimmer of the light,  
 And see that tyranny is *always* weakness.  
 Or fear with its own bosom ill at ease,  
 Would laugh away in scorn the sand-wove chain,  
 Which their own blindness feigned for adamant.  
 Wrong ever builds on quicksands; but the right  
 To the firm center lays its moveless base.

J. R. LOWELL.

The following story, which is very suggestive at this crisis, is strictly true. The Southern gentlemen, who visited the swamp in disguise, and heard the speeches of the slaves, repeated them as nearly as he could recollect, to a friend of Mrs. Child, and she committed them to writing. The incidents occurred during the war of 1812, when the probability of the British landing on our coasts was much talked of.

Mr. Duncan was sitting alone in his elegantly furnished parlor, in the vicinity of Charleston, South Carolina. Before him lay an open volume—Thierry's History of the Norman Conquest. From the natural kindness of his character, and democratic theories deeply imbibed in childhood, his thoughts dwelt more with a nation prostrated and kept in base subjection by the strong arm of violence, than with the renowned robbers, who seized their rich possessions, and haughtily trampled on their dearest rights.

"And so that bold and beautiful race became slaves!" thought he. "The brave and free-souled Harolds, strong of heart and strong of arm; the fair haired Ediths, in their queenly beauty, noble in soul as well as ancestry; these all sank to the condition of slaves. They tamely submitted to their lot, till their free, bright beauty passed under the heavy cloud of animal dullness, and the contemptuous Norman epithet of 'base Saxon churls' was but too significantly true. Yet not without efforts did they thus sink. How often renewed, or how bravely sustained, we know not; for troublous days are not of the defeated, and conquerors write their own history. That they did not relinquish freedom without a struggle, is proved by Robin Hood, and his bold followers, floating in dim and shadowy glory on the outskirts of history; brave outlaws of the free forest, and the wild mountain passes, taking subsistence from the rich possessions that were once their own; and therefore styled thieves and traitors by the robbers who had beggared them. Doubtless they had minstrels of their own; unknown, untrumpeted by fame, yet

singing of their exploits in spirit-stirring tones, to hearts burning with a sense of wrong. Troubled must be the sleep of those who ruled a conquered nation!"

These thoughts were passing through his mind, when a dark mulatto opened the door, and making a servile reverence, said in wheedling tones, "Would Massa be so good as to gib a pass to go to Methodist meeting?"

Mr. Duncan was a proverbially indulgent master, and he at once replied, "Yes Jack, you may have a pass; but you must mind and not stay out all night."

"Oh, no massa. Tom neber preach more than two hours."

Scarcely was the pass written before another servant appeared for a similar request; and presently another and yet another; and yet another. When these interruptions ceased, Mr. Duncan resumed his book, and quietly read about the oppressed Saxons, until the wish for a glass of water induced him to ring the bell. No servant obeyed the summons. With an impatient jerk of the rope, he rang a second time, what a curse it is to be waited upon by slaves! If I were dying the lazy looms would take their own time, and come dragging their heavy heels along an hour after I was in the world of Spirits. My neighbours tell me it is because I never flog them. I believe they are in the right. It is a hard case too, to force a man to be a tyrant, whether he will or no."

A third time he rang the bell more loudly; but waited in vain for the sound of coming footsteps. Then it occurred to him that he had given every one of them a pass to go to the Methodist meeting. This was instantly followed by the remembrance that the same thing had happened a few days before.

We were then at war with Great Britain; and though Mr. Duncan often boasted the attachment of his slaves, and declared them to be the most content and happy labourers in the world, who would not take their freedom if they could, yet by some coincidence of thought the frequency of Methodist meetings immediately suggested the common report that British troops were near the coast, and about to land in Charleston. Simultaneously came the remembrance of Big-boned Dick, who many months before had absconded from a neighbouring planter, and was suspected of holding a rendezvous for run-aways in the swampy depths of some dark forest. The existence of such a gang was indicated by the rapid disappearance of young corn, sweet potatoes, and fat hogs, etc., from the plantations for many miles around.

"The black rascal!" exclaimed he; "if my boys are in league with him!"

The coming threat was arrested by a voice within, which like a chorus from some invis-

ble choir, all at once struck up the lively ballad of Robin Hood; and this brought Big-boned Dick, like Banquo's ghost, unbidden and unwelcome, into incongruous association with his spontaneous sympathy for Saxon serfs, his contempt of "base Saxon churls," who tamely submitted to their fate, and his admiration of the bold outlaws, who lived by plunder in the wild freedom of Saxon forests.

His republican sympathies, 'and the system entailed upon him by his ancestors,' were obviously out of joint with each other; the skillful soldering of casuistry could by no means make them adhere together. Clear as the tones of a Cathedral bell above the hacks and drays of a city, the voice of Reason rose above all the pretexts of selfishness and the apologies of sophistry, and loudly proclaimed that his sympathies were right and his practice wrong. Had there been at his elbow some honest John Woodman, or fearless Elias Hicks, that hour might perhaps have seen him a freeman in giving freedom to his serfs. But he was alone; and the prejudices of education, and the habits of his whole life conjured up a fearful array of lions in his path, and he wist not that they were phantoms.—The admonitions of awakened conscience gradually gave place to considerations of personal safety, and plans for ascertaining the real extent of his danger.

The next morning he asked his slaves with assumed nonchalance whether they had a good meeting.

"Oh, yes, massa, bery nice meeting."

"Where was it?"

The slave pointed to the east of Birch Grove. The white man's eye followed the direction of the bond man's finger, and a deeper cloud gathered on his brow. Without comment he rode on in another direction, and with apparent indifference made similar enquiries of another gang, of labourers. They pointed north of Birch Grove, and replied, "In the Huguenot woods, massa."

With increasing disquietude, he slowly turned his horse toward the city. He endeavoured to conceal his anxiety under a cheerful brow; for he was afraid to ask counsel, even of the most familiar friends, in a community so prone to be blinded by the insane fury under the excitement of such suspicions. Having purchased a complete suit of negro clothes, and a black mask well fitted to his face, he returned home, and awaited the next request for passes to a Methodist meeting.

In a few days the sable faces again appeared before him, one after another, asking permission to hear Tom preach. The passes were promptly given, accompanied by the cool observation, "It seems to me, boys, that you are all growing wonderfully religious of late."

To which they eagerly replied, "Ah if Massa could hear Tom preach, it would make his hair stand up. Tom make everybody tink weder he hab a soul."

When the last one had departed, the master hastily assumed his disguise and hurried after them. Keeping them within sight, he followed over field and meadow, through woods and swamps. As he went on the number of dark figures, all tending toward the same point, continually increased. Now and then some one spoke to him; but he answered briefly, and with an effort to disguise his voice. At last they arrived at one of those swampy islands, so common at the south, insulated by a broad, deep belt of water, and effectually screened from the mainland by a luxuriant growth of forest trees, matted together by a rich entanglement of vines and underwood. A large tree had been felled for a bridge; and over this dusky forms were swarming like ants into their new made nest.

Mr. Duncan had a large share of that animal instinct called physical courage; but his heart throbbled almost audibly as he followed that dark multitude.

At the end of a rough and intricate passage there opened before him a scene of picturesque and imposing grandeur. A level space like a vast saloon, was inclosed by majestic trees, uniting their boughs over it in fantastic resemblance to some Gothic cathedral. Spanish moss formed a thick matted roof, and floated in funeral streamers. From the points of arches hung in luxuriant profusion, some in heavy festoons, others lightly and gracefully leaping forward. The blaze of pine torches threw some into bold relief, and cast others into a shadowy background. And here, and in this lone sanctuary of nature, were assembled many hundreds of swart figures, some seated in thoughtful attitudes, others scattered in moving groups, eagerly talking together. As they glanced about, now sinking into dense shadow, and now emerging into lurid light, they seemed to the slave-holder's excited imagination like demons from the pit, come to claim guilty souls. He had, however, sufficient presence of mind to observe that each one, as he entered, prostrated himself till his forehead touched the ground, and rising placing his finger on his mouth. Imitating this signal, he passed on with the throng, and seated himself behind the glare of the torches.—

For some time he could make out no connected meaning amid the confused buzz of voices, and half suppressed snatches of songs. But at last a tall man mounted the stump of a decayed tree, nearly in the centre of the area, and requested silence.

"When we had our last meeting," said he, "I suppose most all of you know, that we all

concluded it was best to join the British, if so be we could get a good chance. But we didn't all agree about our masters. Some thought we should never be able to keep our freedom without we killed our masters in the first place; others didn't like the thoughts of that; so we agreed to have another meeting to talk about it, and now boys of the British land here in Carolina, what shall we do with our masters?"

He sat down, and a tall sinewy mulatta stepped into his place, exclaiming with fierce gestures, Ravish wives and daughters before their eyes as they have done to us! Hunt them with hounds as they have hunted us!. Shoot them down with rifles, as they have shot us! Throw their carcasses to the crows, they have fattened on our bones; and then let the devil take them where they never rake up the fires o' nights. Who talks of mercy to our masters?"

"I do," said an aged black man, who rose up before the fiery youth, tottering as he leaned upon his oaken staff. "I do;—because the blessed Jesus always talked of mercy. I know we have been fed like hogs and shot at like wild beasts. Myself found the body of my likeliest boy under the tree where buckra rifles reached him. But thanks to the blessed Jesus, I feel it in my poor heart to forgive them. I have been a member of a Methodist church these thirty years, and I've heard many preachers white and black; and they all tell me Jesus said, Do good to them that spite you. Now I say let us love our enemies—let us pray for them; and when our masters flog us, and sell our piccaninies, let us break out singing—

'You may beat upon my body,  
But you cannot harm my soul;  
I shall join the forty thousand by-and-by.

'You may sell my children to Gregory,  
But you cannot harm their soul;  
They will join the forty thousand by-and-by.

'Come slave-trader, come in too,  
The Lord's got pardon here for you;  
You shall join the forty thousand by-and-by.

'Come poor nigger, come in too;  
The Lord's got pardon here for you;  
You shall join the forty thousand by-and-by.

'My skin is black, but my soul is white:  
And when we get to heaven we'll all be alike;  
We shall join the forty thousand by-and-by.

That's the way to glorify the Lord."

Scarcely had the cracked voice ceased the tremulous chant in which these words were uttered, when a loud altercation commenced; some crying out vehemently for the blood of the white men, others maintaining that the

old man's doctrine was right. The aged black remained leaning on his staff, and mildly replied to every outburst of fury, "But Jesus said, do good for evil." Loud rose the din of excited voices, and the disguised slaveholder shrank deeper into the shadow.

TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.

## FUNNY CHRISTIANS."

As falling under this head, St Paul has specified two vices of almost universal prevalence, viz, "foolish talking and jesting." To these belong all merely vain and idle conversation and silly witticisms. Such are not convenient.

1. Because they are *unbecoming*. They would be considered unsuitable in a man holding some high office of state. Now, the Christian holds a higher office than is in the power of any earthly government to bestow. He is a city set upon a hill, is to be a "living epistle," an "example of the believers," in word and conversation, as well as in charity, purity, etc.

2. Because they are *unprofitable*. No man whose mind is fully bent upon any important end in this life, finds time or inclination for such waste of words. He endeavours to make everything, even his leisure conversation subserve the great end he has in view. And shall Christians be less careful?—They who are commanded to "redeem the time," to be as servants "waiting for their Lord," to be always ready, always "looking for and hastening unto" the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord?

3. Because they are *hurtful*. They tend to dissipate the mind, and unfit it for higher duties and enjoyments. "Idle jesting" easily becomes a habit, and once fastened upon a Christian is sure to break out often where it will be felt to be very unseemly. It is unfriendly to serious conversation, to meditation upon those things which Timothy was commanded to give himself "wholly" to; and especially is it unfriendly to that frame of mind in which alone we can hope to hold communion with our Father in heaven.

## A LOST LIFETIME.

A few days ago, a young man in my parish, died of a painful and sudden disease. He was the son of an elder in the church, though not a member himself. Always kind and generous, and of a retiring spirit, he was courteous to all, and popular, especially with the young men. About two weeks before his death, he communicated to his mother his determination to become a Christian, and the announcement caused a joy in that mother's heart, to which it had been a stranger for a long time. The physician encouraged this young man to believe that he should recover, and his decision became more settled; but alas! his disease took a course not anticipated, and in about ten days after his profession, his case was acknowledged to be hopeless. His extremities became cold, and the physician remarked that unless these could become warm, and the circulation of the blood be restored, it was useless to hope. Every effort which a most loving mother could exert, and an attached sister could propose, was made to restore circulation, but after nearly an hour of ceaseless struggle, nothing was effected. The physician entered.

"Well, doctor, they have been making me warm as toast, but my hands are very numb, and now I want to know whether you think I shall recover."

"I am afraid you cannot."

"Well, then I can say, 'Thy will be done.' I wish, mother, you and sister M. would sing that sweet hymn with me."

This was done, and with a clear voice, he joined them. But a gloomy thought now visited him, and an hour or two after, in the silence of the room, he was heard to say, "Lost! lost! lost!" This surprised the mother, and caused the immediate inquiry, "My son, are your hopes feeble?"

"No, mother but oh! my lost lifetime! I'm twenty-four, and until a few weeks since, nothing had been done for Christ, and everything for myself and my pleasures. My companions will think I've made a profession in view of death. Oh! that I could live to meet this remark, and do something to show my sincerity, and to redeem my lost, my lost, *lost* life."

How true is it that it is more solemn to

live than to die! Life determines the character of one's death-time. *A lost lifetime!* It is like a living body which has lost its heart. It is like tearing out of a beautiful book all but the index of your life reader. *A lost lifetime!* Even to a Christian it is like offering you a house, and robbing it of its furniture, and taking away your mother, father, sisters, and all your friends out of it, making it empty and solitary, and putting, in the places of all these, the ghosts of past sins sighing through those empty and silent halls. Ah! it is more solemn to live than to die. Take care, young men, if you would not suffer the sorrow of this dying young man: if you would not in sorrow cry out, because of a lost lifetime, "O, my God, take me not away in the midst of my days," then be careful of the hours and days lost to yourself, and to Christ, and to eternity.—*Tract Journal.*

## KNOWLEDGE IS POWER.

Lord Bacon is usually cited as the author of this proverb: and perhaps, as it stands in the above form, he is. But Bacon was a thorough student of his Bible, and many of his wise sayings are traceable to it. So is the proverb "Knowledge is power."—Long before the Lord Chancellor's days, Solomon had said, "I am understanding, I have strength" (Prov. viii. 14), connecting the understanding and the strength together; and again, "A wise man scaleth the city of the mighty, and casteth down the strength of the confidence thereof" (Prov. xxi. 22); and again, "A wise man is strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength" (prov. xxiv. 5). Indeed the book of proverbs is full of such allusions to the strength which wisdom gives. And we cannot but notice that the apostle thus links the two things together in reference to Him who is "the wisdom,"—"Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. i. 24). In Rev. v. 12 also, "wisdom and strength" are put together, in the song of the heavenly praise to the Lamb.

## THE WILL AND THE WAY.

"Where there's a will there's a way."—No adage is more true than this in all secular pursuits. Let a man's heart once get fairly embarked in any direction, and he soon follows it with head, or hand, or purse—or all combined. Every labour is cheerfully undertaken, every privation is cheerfully endured, if the heart is only in the project. The will not only finds out a way, but is ready to bear everything that is to be encountered in that way.

We have read of a naturalist who was found—some years since—on the wild shores of the Pacific, five thousand miles from his comfortable home. He was wandering alone upon the sea-side, collecting rare specimens of natural history for the cabinet of the University of H——. What were privations, or loneliness, or scanty fare, or the absence of loved household faces to him? Was not his whole soul in search for rare flowers, such as bloom in the Californian plains, and for cunning shells, and such as the Pacific sea casts upon its pebbly strand? His heart was *invested* in that enterprise; he was a self-devoted missionary of science. The gold-hunts in the Sacramento and in the Sierra Nevada called forth the same intensity of pursuit. Over the pestilential Isthmus, through the tangled thickets and swamps, out of sight and civilization, these dust-seekers pressed their eager search. The will found the way.—The will *made* the way.

Now, when a Christian is in *down-right earnest*, he will carry the principle into his religion. The will to serve God (given him by the Holy Spirit), the will to honour Christ, and extend his kingdom, and save souls, soon finds out manifold ways to work in. The man manages to get to church, however hot the sun streams down, or however fiercely the rain pours. His heart so aches for his ragged class of "street-boys" in the Sabbath school, that a headache is of small moment to him. The day's labour may have been a "weariness to the flesh;" but the bell rings for the weekly lecture, and every peal is welcome music.

He cannot *afford* to lose that lecture, any more than his pastor can afford to have him absent. It is so on prayer-meeting night. He will be missed if he takes council with tired limbs or sleepy eyes.—His soul will miss the meeting too. So he "fires up" his engine once more, and sallies out, weary as he is, to the blessed circle. The neighbour who dropped in to talk of politics or discuss stocks, does not detain him. His heart is at the meeting with a handful of praying ones, and the body "follows suit." And then, too, he must give an extra five or ten pounds this year to the Foreign Missions; he wants to invest a trifle in the new library for F——street Mission School; he wants a thousand or two of tracts to circulate through his ward; and Widow V——'s children have not a shoe to their feet. But where there's a will there's a way. God gives a true large-souled Christian a sort of holy ingenuity; a sanctified sagacity in devising "ways and means" to meet the demands of benevolence. The Christian of huge heart and small purse will manage to find the money which he wants for God's service, even though wife have to run up last winter's bonnet without treating herself to a new one. His old coat is pressed into another six months' service. The parlour must wear its old suit of paper and its ancient-looking carpet for another year. So he makes himself rich enough to meet all the extra calls on his meagre purse, and oh how his "liberal soul" is "made fat!"

Such religion as this is a downright enjoyment. It is a daily luxury. It is turning work into play, and drudgery into delight. The heart lives in a constant sunshine; and all the aches, and pains, and bad humours, and rheumatisms, and ailments of the spiritual dyspeptic, he knows no more about them than he knows of the plague or the leprosy. But take the heart out of religion, and what a bondage it becomes! What an up-hill drudgery! The disciple becomes a galley-slave: he prays as a whipped school-boy "membles" over his lesson, and takes the Bible as a wayward child takes a dose of medicine. His profession is a "tinkling cymbal." The duties of the sanctuary are a weary penance. His religion is a mockery; and he creeps at last into his selfish grave without one single living deed of Christ-like piety.

to survive him. Reader? is your whole soul in your religion? Then your pastor will have at least *one member* that he will not fear to lean on; and when you die, your monument will not blush to wear the noble inscription, "ALWAYS ABOUNDING IN THE WORK OF THE LORD.—T. L. Cuyler.

### JOSHUA'S RESOLVE.

"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

Will not you imitate this example? The venerable man who made this resolve, was one in high station; no less than the chief ruler of Israel. He had long experience that the service of the Lord was good. He urged the people to choose whom they would serve, but he assured them that his mind was made up, even if he should be alone: "We will serve the Lord." Will not you also serve the Lord?

When? "This day." What other time can you choose? Yesterday was, but is not. To-morrow may be, and yet it may not be for you. This day is your time to choose, as it was the time for Israel.

But why should you serve the Lord? He is Jehovah, the maker of heaven and earth, possessed of all goodness, excellence and glory; worthy of all love, obedience, confidence, and praise. Of him we receive all things richly to enjoy. And above all things he is our Redeemer, "who loved us, and gave himself for us," that he might deliver us from all evil, from all enemies, and from the wrath of God. And finally, he assures us that his servants shall be preserved unto life eternal, and for ever enjoy and glorify him. On the contrary, if we forsake him he will forsake us, and give us over to all evil and final ruin with his enemies, who can neither deliver nor help themselves nor us. "Choose you, therefore, this day, whom ye will serve."

But what is it to serve the Lord? "To love him with all the heart," to obey, trust, and honour him. This is the plain, simple truth. This God requires.

Is there not some difficulty in the case?—Joshua said to Israel, when they readily promised: "Ye cannot serve the Lord, for he is a holy God." He knew how men are more ready to promise than to perform, and therefore stayed them in their eagerness, that they might ponder well their undertaking. So every one should "count the cost," and engage in the work with deliberation, and beware of the difficulties. Not difficulties in the nature of his service, but in our unholiness, our associations, and the course of this world. By the grace of God and the help of his Spirit, we may engage to serve God and be sure of

success. His loving-kindness is rich, free, and abundant; his Spirit working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight.

Set up the stone, then, or some monument, as a witness that you have chosen the Lord to be your God, and that you are bound unto him in an everlasting covenant. Write it in a book, that you may read it in time to come, and keep it always in mind. Thus will the Lord be your God, and you will be his people.—*American Messenger.*

### SUDDEN DEATH.

Reader! did you ever see a friend drop instantly from time into eternity? Four years since, I saw the body of a friend whom I loved deposited in the grave. It was that of a merchant, who retired to rest at a late hour and was found dead in his bed in the morning. Beside that grave stood a young man in the vigour of health. The next day that young man while at work suddenly stopped, and in five minutes he was in eternity. The writer was commissioned to carry the sad intelligence to his wife. Never will he forget the scene that followed. It was nearly night; the sun was just setting on a lovely summer evening. The wife sat watching at her door her husband's return. I tried to prepare her for the bereavement of which she was yet ignorant, but when it was made known a long time passed before a soothing word of consolation could be heard. Within two months from that day that young widow was called into eternity almost as suddenly as her husband. And why may not the reader be called as suddenly? Are you prepared for such a result?—is your treasure laid up in heaven? Have you a hope, a good hope, a hope that will be as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, in a dying hour? If your hope is one that purifies the soul, yet have you done all for Christ and his cause that you wish to do?—Have you done all you desire to do for the salvation of your friends who are on the road to death?

## Religious Intelligence.

**Calvanistic Methodist—The Religious Intelligencer** (St. John) says, concerning the great revival which has been in progress in Wales during the last two years:

"As to figures, it appears that the Calvanistic Methodists, who are probably the largest body in Wales, have had the greatest accession to their numbers; 36,000 have been added to them, over 30,000 to the Independent body, 10,000 to the Baptists, 4,500 to the Wesleyan Methodists, and 20,000 to the Episcopal Church,—thus making one hundred thousand in all."

**Romish Decline in Ireland.**—In 1845 the population of Ireland was well-nigh nine millions. Three millions—a number equal to the entire population of Scotland—in the course of the intervening fifteen years disappeared, in consequence of famine and emigration. The famine fell most heavily on the Popish portion of the people, and the emigration has proceeded mainly from the same class. It is perhaps unnecessary to tell you that of the multitudes who found their way to the United States, a very large proportion renounced Popery; and the same thing may be affirmed in regard to those who landed in Australia, New Zealand, and other parts of our colonial empire. We are, however, looking at present only to Ireland; and, although the emigration has, from the American crisis, received a temporary check, it may be expected to go on feeding itself by the large sum sent home by emigrants to bring out their friends. Then, both in the south and west of Ireland for several years there has been a constant and rising tide of emigration of Scotch settlers; so that the All-wise seems now about to settle a plantation from Scotland in Munster as he did in Ulster two centuries ago. All these settlers, permeating the provinces with Protestantism, are severally and collectively a powerful weapon in the hands of him

"Who moves in a mysterious way,  
His wonders to perform,"

for an aggressive warfare against the anti-Christian system. Then look at the very blunders of Rome herself, so long pretending in Ireland to be the friend of liberty, and at length completely throwing off the mask in getting up that very foolish expedition of the Irish Italian brigade.

**Progress in Italy.**—Italy, we rejoice to learn, the work of evangelization is progressing with giant strides. Mr. M'Dougall, the Free Church missionary at Florence, narrated to the Irish Assembly a variety of cheering incidents in the history of the consolidating of the Italian kingdom within the last few weeks. The Irish Presbyterian Church, we may notice, contributed no less a sum last year than £13,000 for Italian evangelization; and to it, therefore, the

statement by Mr. M'Dougall as to the new Italian law of liberty came with all the odor of tidings from a far distant land. According to the Sardinian law of freedom, which has been carried over into Italy, with the exception of Rome and the territory of Venice, both of which are longing for their birth-right, the colporteur travels about unmolested with his passport and permits, as the vendor of religious books. The church-yards have been thrown open to Protestant and Catholic dead without distinction. The government of the common schools has been taken out of the hands of the priests; and liberty of discussion in religious matters has been declared to be no crime in the eye of the law. What is most fortunate at such a time, is, that there is ready to hand, the *Diodati Bible*, 300 years old, a translation superior, some think, to our English version, or the German edition of Luther and the ancient Waldensian Church. The students of the Waldensian Church, who enjoyed their residence in Florence during the winter and spring months, are now employing their holiday in tours of evangelization and colportage. In reference to colportage, we may state that Mr. M'Dougall estimates the sale of Bibles last year in all Italy at between 40,000 and 50,000 copies. "I never (he said) felt such a thrill of pleasure in my heart as when I learned that a colporteur who left Florence last spring, laden with Bibles and religious treatises, had journeyed on foot through the States of the Church recently taken from the Pope, and, after selling right and left without let or hindrance, had safely arrived at Naples." And though box after box of both Bibles and religious books was forwarded to Naples, a depot proposed to be established there did not really exist for some months; for each box was emptied of its contents a day or two after its arrival, and earnest entreaties were sent for more.

**Kneeling at prayer.**—As the above practice, and simillar innovations, seem to be gaining ground in various sections of the Presbyterian Church, under the idea that they have the sanction, of ancient custom, if not of Scripture, it may be both interesting and instructive to those lovers of novelty to learn the opinion of an English clergyman on the subject. I refer to Dr. Stanley, Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Oxford, who has the following passage in his "Lectures on the History of the Eastern Church"—page 196. Speaking of the great Council of Nice, or Nicæa, which met A. D. 325, and which was composed of 318 bishops, assembled from all parts of Christendom, he says:

"One regulation alone—the twentieth canon—related to worship—that which enjoins that, on every Sunday, and in daily worship between Easter and Pentecost, the devotions of the people shall be performed standing, kneeling is forbidden. The almost universal violation of this canon in

Western churches, at the present day, illustrates our remoteness from the time and country of the Nicene fathers. To pray standing was, in public worship, believed to have been an apostolical usage. It is still the universal practice in the Eastern Church, not only on Sunday, but on week days. But in the West, kneeling has gradually taken its place; and the Presbyterians of Scotland, and at times the Lutherans of Germany, are probably the only Occidental Christians who now observe the one only rubric laid down for Christian worship by the first Ecumenical Council."

What will our modern innovators say to this? Though the posture in worship be in itself a matter of indifference, yet it is not a matter of indifference for a minister or a congregation to introduce changes without the authority of the Church, and in opposition to prevailing feeling, or, if they will, prejudice. There are, it is believed, some of our Free Church congregations who greatly need to be taught a lesson on this subject; and it may help to enlighten them to be told that their innovations are a departure from the primitive and apostolic usages of the Church. It is a melancholy symptom of the state of the Church when a great stir is made about such things as organs, hymns, and postures in prayer.—*Correspondence of Guardian.*

### WORLDY CHRISTIANS.

Under the mistake that religion has little to do with his ordinary life, many a man appears, at different times of the day, in two separate characters. In the morning he enters his closet, prays to the Father in secret, and feels there his soul full of divine affections and hopes. But he leaves this hallowed retirement for his labor or business through the day. He works, he bargains, he acts as if his religion had nothing to do with his life now, or his life with God; and his soul is barren of heavenly joys. He returns to his closet again at evening time; but his chafed, weary spirit, that has been so long kept away from the fountain of its life, finds not its early peace, and he wonders why the Lord has forsaken him. He need not wonder. The marvel would be, if the Holy One would sanction this attempt to put asunder what He has joined together—to lower religion from a life to an occasional prayer.—*Life for God.*

### LIVE FOR SOMETHING.

Thousands of men breathe, and live; pass off the stage of life, and are heard of no more. Why? They did not do a particle of good in the world; and none were blest by them, none could point to them as the instruments of their redemption; not a life they wrote, not a word they spoke, could be recalled, and so they perished—their light went out in darkness, and they were not remembered more than the insects of yesterday. Will you thus live and die, O man immortal!—Live for something. Do good, and leave behind you a monument of virtue that the storms of time can never destroy. Write your name by kindness, love, and mercy, on the hearts of the thousands you come in contact with year by year, and you will never be forgotten. No, your name, your deeds, will be as legible on the hearts you leave behind, as the stars on the brow of evening. Good deeds will shine as brightly on the earth as the stars of heaven.—*Dr Chalmers.*

### Shall a Periodical be Prayed for?

The church which does not habitually pray for its minister cannot expect any decided blessing upon his labours. It is true that such blessings may descend in answer to his own prayers, and in spite of the indifference of his people; but that church has no business to expect it, and ought to mingle its rejoicings for the blessing with repentance for its own indifference. It is a settled point, that the ministry cannot perform its work unsustained by the prayers of God's people.

Ought it then to be expected that the religious periodical shall perform its work without the same support? That work is, in many respects, the same kind with that of the minister of Jesus Christ, while the range of its influence is immensely wider. The minister can only speak to a few hundreds; often less than a single hundred.—The periodical audience is with the thousands. Probably the sheet which conveys this article will be read by some thousand persons. What an audience is this!—Ought not then the periodical be prayed for, that its conductors may have the spirit of wisdom, of a sound mind, and of their Lord and Master? Its conduct is a great and difficult work, weighed down with responsibility, suspending interests vast as the years of eternity.

## AFFLICTION.

I CANNOT call affliction sweet,  
And yet 'twas good to bear  
Affliction brought me to Thy feet  
And I found comfort there

My weaned soul was all resign'd  
To Thy most glorious will;  
Oh! had I kept that better mind  
Or been afflicted still!

Where are the vows which then I vow'd,  
The joys which then I knew?  
Those vanish'd like the morning cloud,  
These like the early dew.

Lord, grant me grace for every day,  
Whate'er my state may be,  
Through life, in death, with truth to say,  
"My God is all to me!"

## THE GOOD NEWS.

A Semi-monthly periodical, devoted to the Religious Education of the old and young.—Published on the 1st and 15th of every month, at One Dollar.

It contains:

1. Original and Selected articles, on practical Religion.
  2. Revival intelligence and accounts of the various Christian movements for the amelioration of society.
  3. A Scripture Lesson for every Sabbath in the year adapted to assist parents and teachers.
  4. News of the churches in Canada.
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## THE EVANGELIZER.

A religious periodical, unsectarian in character and devoted exclusively to the advancement of the Kingdom of God in the world, is published towards the end of every month, at 25 cents per annum, or 50 copies of one issue for a dollar.

The matter of The Evangelizer consists of articles original and selected, and is adapted to arouse sinners, direct inquirers, and quicken God's people.

In order that the Lord's work may be advanced, we offer The Evangelizer for

## Gratuitous Circulation.

We are anxious that our paper should circulate among the careless and the imidel, as well as among the religious. Many of these we know, will not subscribe for, nor support a paper such as ours, but we wish it to circulate amongst them, notwithstanding. And the way it can be done is this.

Reader, suppose in your locality, school-section, congregation, village or town, there are twenty, thirty, or fifty families, or more, which you could conveniently visit once a month. If you wish to do them good, send to us for as many papers as there are families. If there be fifty families, we will send fifty copies each month. Take them round—hand them kindly to every one of the fifty who will receive them, no matter by what name they are named. When you hand them in, speak a word for Christ. It will be a good opportunity for you. If you are not able to do so, leave the Lord himself to speak through the paper.

In this work all classes of our readers may engage, but especially would we like to enlist a number of females, as we have always found them able and devoted distributors.

## The Gospel Message.

Is a small periodical we publish monthly and is substantially a Gospel tract of four pages, or two Gospel tracts of two pages each, or four Gospel tracts of one page each.

It is well adapted for distribution on the railway cars, steamers, at the dismissal of congregations on household visitation, and wherever Gospel tracts can be circulated.

In order that we may supply these as cheaply as possible, the matter of The Message will appear first for some time in The Evangelizer; so that we will be able to send One Hundred and Twenty copies of The Gospel Message by post to any part of Canada for 50 cents.

To those who have the opportunity of scattering, but cannot afford to purchase, as many as they can circulate, we will be glad to supply them gratis as far as the Lord enables us.

For the gratuitous circulation of Evangelizer and Gospel Message.

## Donations

Are thankfully received. The scattering of leaflets of truth, is with us a work of faith and labor of love. We spend our time, our talent and our substance, without expecting or desiring any benefit, but such as the Lord sees fit to bestow—so that if He should stir up any of His people to help us with their substance it will be thankfully received and acknowledged.

## Colporteurs.

We have now Eight Colporteurs, who devote their time to the distribution of our publications, whom we commend to the Christian kindness of those whom they visit, and to the care and keeping of the Great Head of the Church.

The sphere of usefulness is wide, and the need of Colporteurs great, so that if any young man of piety and activity is desposed to enter on the work, in connection with us they will be kind enough to communicate with us direct.

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## PRINTING!

We have this month been enabled to add considerably to our stock and varieties of type, so that we are prepared to publish,

SERMONS, PAMPHLETS, TRACTS,

and anything else of a character kindred to our publications,

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