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THE EARTH.

FRAMED AND FURNISHED AS A HABITATION FOR MAN.

BY THE REV. W. ARNOT, M.A., GLASGOW.

But there is another characteristic of the sea, which, as matters go among men, ought to be more effective in stirring us up to gratitude; inasmuch as preservation from a near and great danger affects a human mind more than those many benefits which distil as the dew from heaven, and are therefore seldom observed. Dutchmen never forget their dykes. They know well that these earthen walls constitute the constant and only barrier against a desolating inundation. When you hear the storm at midnight, and think of the poor Hollander sleeping beneath the level of the sea, with nothing but a mound of earth between him and a deluge, you turn on your other side with a thought of thankfulness that Englishmen are not at the mercy of the treacherous element, as it is fashionable to call it. There you are reckoning without your host: at this moment we depend on a mechanical contrivance to defend us from a deeper flood. If the wheels of the huge machinery should be clogged and stand still to-night, the sea would, before morning, cover our highest mountains, by the mere operation of the ordinary law of gravity. You are aware that the earth is not perfectly spherical, and that it revolves rapidly on its own axis.—These two facts bear an intimate relation to each other, and together exercise a decisive influence in making the world a fit habitation for man. If either fact were changed, the earth would be no longer habitable.—If the globe should become a perfect sphere, while its diurnal revolution continued, the water would be all withdrawn from the regions round either pole, and heaped up in a deep and all-devastating ocean across its midst: if, on the other hand, the revolution of the earth should cease, while the configuration of its mass remained unchanged, the waters would recede wholly from the middle regions, and form in two great circular seas around the poles.

The case stands thus:—The diurnal revolution being necessary in relation to day and night, light and heat, and other es-

sential qualities of a human habitation, the form of the globe has been moulded accordingly. It has been made in the main spherical, but with a comparatively minute deviation. The diameter which would pierce it through the poles is about twenty-six miles shorter than the diameter which would pierce it through the equator. If the solid matter of the globe were perfectly spherical in form, the centrifugal force of the revolution on its axis would raise all the water in a ridge with the culminating line on the equator: but the globe has been cast in a mould which gradually rises by a gentle slope from either pole till it terminates in a ridge twenty-six miles in height, girding it round the centre. This elevation of land in the middle regions of the globe precisely counterbalances the centrifugal force of its revolution; and therefore the disposition of land and water, with the earth whirling round, is the same as it would have been on a perfectly spherical body at rest. This is, perhaps, at once the most beautiful and most palpable adaptation in nature. It is a mark of the Maker's hand left upon his work.—“Glory to God in the highest” is inscribed upon the earth below; and so large are the letters in which the inscription has been written, that he who cannot read it must be helplessly shortsighted or wilfully blind. It is because an Almighty arm keeps this ball always swinging round, that we can lie down to sleep without the fear of being awakened by a deluge.

But we must turn now from the great reservoir in which the water is contained, to the channels by which it is distributed.—In this department new and equal wonders meet our eye. Whether we look, on the one hand, to the veins and ducts of the human body, or, on the other, to the rivers and clouds of the earth and sky, we find an apparatus at once complicated in plan and simple in operation for carrying on the circulation of the system. But look to the streets and lanes of our cities, and, notwithstanding recent efforts to improve them,

we observe still a marked contrast. As to the sap-circulation provided for man, whether within or around him, behold it is very good: as to the sap-circulation provided by man, behold, as yet for the most part, it is very bad! Every time a navvie or a lecturer is suffused with perspiration, many miles of sewers are flushed, and the health of the system is thereby maintained: as a general rule, the sewers of our cities are never flushed except when nature inundates them by a shower.

The Psalms of David supply a formula for expressing the circulation of the world. "The waters stood above the mountains: . . . at thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunders they hasted away. They go up by the mountains: they go down by the valleys into the place which thou hast founded for them. Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth."—(Psal. civ.) It is a wonderful hydraulic machine, and it never goes out of order.—How manifest its design; how skilful its contrivance; how mighty its power!

Here lies the earth, with its mountains and valleys, its islands and continents; but unless it be watered, it cannot become a habitation either for man or beast. There lies the sea alongside; but there the sea is useless to the dry land. Although an ocean three times the area of the land lies wettering all around it, the land will remain an unmitigated wilderness for want of water. It would be "water, water everywhere, but not a drop to drink."—The earth could not arise and dip itself in the ocean every morning, and would not benefit by the bath although it were possible to take it. The sea, on the other hand, could not periodically rise and inundate the land; nor would the visitant be welcome although he were able to come.—They sometimes propose such an immersion as a sovereign remedy for the ills of Ireland; but I observe they are not Irishmen who prescribe that cure. Helpless and useless for the great purposes of life would both earth and ocean be, if each were imprisoned by gravitation in its own separate compartment. As well might you try to enclose a space by two straight lines, as expect to carry on the functions of comical life with only these two elements.—But there is no such defect in the construc-

tion of Nature's machinery, and no such halting in the movement of its wheels.—The air comes in as a Mediator between land and water, laying its hand on both, and enabling them to meet in peace. Behold the Trinity of Nature, and the redemption which it brings!

The function of the atmosphere is to mediate between the land and the water: the three links are formed into a circle, and the stream, not of electric fire, but of pure water, runs round the endless ring in a true perpetual motion. The air, heated by the sun, draws up into its bosom vast quantities of water from the ocean, carefully leaving all the salt behind. Indeed, that same air is very dainty in its tastes, and very skilful in gratifying them. It not only draws fresh water from the salt sea, but it distils for its own use the pure liquid from stagnant pools which men permit to fester round their dwellings, leaving all the filth behind for the punishment of those who allow it to accumulate. So the Sun of Righteousness bends down towards a polluted world, and draws up to heaven a multitude whom no man can number; but in the spiritual as well as in the physical updrawing "nothing shall enter that defileth." When, in the processes of the new covenant, the love of Christ draws a people to himself from the sea of wickedness, all the bitterness is left behind. As these stainless clouds that stud the bosom of the sky in the noon of a summer day were drawn from stagnant pools, and slimy, fetid rivers, and briny seas, so those risen saints, who stand round the Redeemer's throne in white, were taken from many a pit of sin, and made as pure as the heaven in which they dwell.

Look up to these clouds—these great water-carriers for a world; how joyously and jauntily they career along! The huge masses skip and whirl, and chase each other like lambs at play, neither wearied with the weight they bear, nor dizzy with the long look down. Here, for once, is perfect engineering applied to water-supply. No retaining walls are needed, and no sharp turns to keep the level. How softly they lie; how quickly they move; how gently they fall, where they are needed, and when! You are awakened from your first sleep by a rattling in the casement and a rumbling in the chimney. You rise and

look out on the moonlit sky: the cause of the nocturnal commotion is explained in a moment. An interminable line of laden clouds, like a huge luggage-train, is spinning eastward through the sky from the Atlantic to the dry table-lands on the confines of Europe and Asia. Those thirsty regions had telegraphed, by electricity through the air most probably, to their correspondent in the western waters, that the Caspian and Dead Seas were in danger of becoming dry. The correspondent, ever watchful, and having withal a large stock in hand immediately dispatched an extraordinary night-train, with orders to run express all the way, "for the King's business requireth haste." And there it goes, frightfully quick and with an infinity of imposing sound: but you perceive it is running on the main line; the axletrees are well greased, and the switches all right: you tumble into bed again, by way of shunting yourself off into a siding, and sleep soundly till the morning, confident that no collision will take place. "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches; so is this great and wide sea."—(Psal. civ.)

While the heavens declare the glory of God, earth and sea in unison echo back the anthem. Who could be an Atheist, with his foot on this green earth, and his eye open toward that blue sky? Standing here on the solid mass of the world, feeling the pulse of its life, and observing the law of its gigantic circulation, can you still say, "I do not believe in God?" Then, you may go next through the docks of Liverpool and the mills of Manchester, and cry at the close of your pilgrimage, "I do not believe in man!"

The whole apparatus of exhalation and cloud-carnage corresponds to the arterial system of animated bodies, whereby the purified blood is borne outward from the heart to the extremities for nourishment: the fall of rain and the flow of rivers correspond to the venous system, whereby the used blood is carried back to the heart and lungs for purification and propulsion again. Unlike man's best machinery, this process produces absolutely no waste: not so much as a dewdrop goes a missing in a thousand years. A drop exhales from the ground as the morning sun grows hot: it goes out of

sight in the fathomless ocean of air; but it is not lost: it is in the book, and in by double entry; it must and will cast up at the balance in the proper place. It dissipates from a daisy in your garden in June: if stock were taken at Christmas, it might be found frozen in near Petersburg on the Neva; or sparkling in the summer sun from the paddle of Dr. Livingstone's little steamer on the Zambesi: it might be found on a pinnacle of the fantastic icicles that adorn Niagara; or springing in the unknown fountains that feed the mysterious Nile: it might be found adhering to a feather with which a mother at midnight is wetting the lips of her dying child; or constituting a tenth part of a great tear, standing on the black cheek of an African youth, while the white slaver is counting out the price and stowing away the cargo: it might be found—but where might it not be found? Only one thing is sure—it could not be lost. Into the hands of the same "faithful Creator" goes the body of a redeemed man, when it returns to dust. We need not be afraid. It does not go out of God's sight, and he is able to gather it into a glorious one again. "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Fear not, ye are of more value than many dewdrops!

After they have scattered showers here and there over a continent, some mountain range shooting far up into the sky fairly stops the career of the clouds, and compels them to disgorge all their treasure.

South America lies flat like a flounder on the map, but its vertebral ridge does not run straight along the middle of its body; it follows the curvature of the left side, not far from the margin all the way. When an uninformed observer meets a similar structure in an animal, he thinks it a kind of monster spoilt in the making; but in all such cases there is a sufficient reason for the apparent deviation from the normal form. So in that Continent, the position of the great mountain ridge, not on the eastern side, nor in the middle, but near the western shore, is an outstanding evidence of design in the configuration of the globe. Had the mountains run along the Atlantic instead of the Pacific seaboard, the trade-wind continuing to blow from the East, the bulk of South America would have been an arid desert. As it is,

with the mountains on the west, and the winds blowing all the year from the east, the water which the wind wafts from the sea is carried almost across the continent ere it is discharged, and therefore is compelled to traverse the whole breadth of the land, on its return voyage by the rivers.—Such, accordingly, is the natural fertility of those regions, that when they shall be subdued and possessed by man, they may sustain a multitude almost equal to the present population of the world.

I have sometimes thought that the mountain range on the western brim of South America does for the cloud, what Death on the extreme edge of this world's life does for misers. Having sucked up the wealth from the earth and sea, they soar along, obliged to let down a few drops here and there, but keeping all they can, obeying the law of grip as simply and strongly as the Earth obeys the law of gravity; but when they strike upon the bare shoulder of that grand terminal Cordillera of Time they must let all their treasure go. The treasure, when the vessel which carried it is dissolved, obeying now another law of God, gushes backward by many channels, refreshing all the Continent in its reflux. Guineas are God's drops: and He can use the gatherer as he uses the cloud—to carry them to the place where they are wanted, and pour them out there.

I love rivers. A sweet little river was the companion of my childhood. It moved, and twisted, and sparkled, and chattered, and seemed to speak to me. It knew me well, for all the summer over I was in it every day, and sometimes almost all the day. Devoutly yet every year I make a pilgrimage to its banks, and revive my early friendship. Every river has its own character, and its distinguishing features. A fancy still lingers within me, that if you should carry me blindfold to the spot, and open my eyes on a square yard of that river's surface, I would recognize it, and it would recognize me. Its eddies dance about in their own way, not exactly like the way of other respectable streams. If I had been bred to reverence any of the powers of nature, the spirit of the rivers would have been my tutelary.—Fifteen years ago, I stood at the foot of the rock, and saw Niagara throw its giant drapery over my head; I seem yet to hear

its awful hum. Two years ago, I reached the Rhine bank for the first time late at night, and from a lofty view-point looked upon the stream, when the moon was striving with all her might to make up for the absence of her lord. It is something to have seen these two once in one's life.—I would willingly undergo the toil of travelling, if I were permitted to visit a few more of the hoary chiefs in the regions where they reign in equal majesty and mercy.—the Mississippi and the Amazon, the Nile and the Ganges. Flow on, flow on ye rivers, to the sea; and from the sea again feed all your fountains: from it, and to it, flow ye all. Rivers flowing from the sea, and flowing to it, ye remind me of created being in the aggregate, coming from the Infinite and returning to the Infinite. Of Him and to Him are all things.

(To be continued.)

THE BOW IN THE CLOUD.

“And I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.”
—Gen. ix. 16.

Nature again smiles, and emerges from beneath her watery covering. The promise of him who cannot lie is given, that a second flood shall no more destroy the earth.—And what is to be the sign,—the enduring remembrance-token? “I do set my bow in the cloud.” There it had been, perhaps, before, encircling the heavens with its belt of golden hues, but now, it was destined to awaken new thoughts, and to inspire grateful emotions in the heart of man.—now, it was to testify of God's promise,—to be a lasting memorial of His covenant through all generations. Often, as the stormy cloud should gather in the heavens, threatening to pour its pent-up waters on a sinful world, when the “bow” appeared, it was to be as the voice of God declaring, “the waters shall no more destroy all flesh.” Nay, in condescension to human weakness, the almighty was henceforth to regard it, as a remembrancer to Himself, of his gracious promise, “I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant.”

“The bow in the cloud” was a pledge of temporal blessings,—to the believer, it is also a striking type of spiritual. Is there no bow of promise which gilds another sky,

—which tells, of wrath averted, of security insured? Yes; Jesus is the "Bow in the cloud" of Heaven's wrath, assuring the believer, that a fiercer storm, *than any that ever devastated the world*, has passed away. When, to the eye of faith, He appears in the spiritual firmament, every fear is dispelled,—God "will not return to destroy;" and, as the rainbow appears with blended colours, all melting into each other with the most perfect harmony; so, in Christ, justice and mercy, holiness and love, power and goodness, all combine to form *one* glorious and resplendent arch.

The rainbow tells of the *perpetuity* of the covenant. Four thousand years have passed, and, still it spans the heavens.—Christian! see you not in this, an emblem of the *immutability* of your God, in redemption? He Himself regards it as such: "Thus saith the Lord, if you can break My covenant of the day, and My covenant of the night, and, that there should not be day and night in their season, then may also My covenant be broken with David My servant"—that is, with Christ and His people, of whom David was the type.—Thus, the God of nature, is alike *unchangeable*, as a God of grace.

The rainbow is a token of God's covenant with His people. "For this," says He, "as the waters of Noah unto Me; for, as I have sworn, that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn, that I would not be wroth with thee nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but My kindness shall not depart from thee; neither shall the covenant of My peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee." Here, and here alone, is the *security* of the Christian, the unalterable purpose of a covenant God.

He has given *them* also a "Bow in the cloud," to which, in every season of impending danger, they may direct the eye of faith.

Reader! is yours a dark and cheerless day? Is your horizon obscured by threatening clouds? Remember, there is the "Bow in the cloud," the token of the *unalterable* covenant God. Like the mariner, in a stormy sea, you may be appalled at the indications of a coming tempest, you may be listening with alarm, to the roar of the angry waves and the hoarse howling

of the wind. Lift up the eye of faith,—see, yonder opening in the clouds,—yonder faint ray of light,—yonder splendid "Bow in the cloud." It is to you the covenant-token that relief is at hand, for "the Lord will look upon it." It is His own promise. Your sorrowing eye, and the eye of your Father in heaven, will meet in *one* spot,—on Jesus Christ.—and then, as the Lord remembers His covenant, and thinks upon you for good, you will be enabled to "trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon your God." Yea, the darker the cloud, the more brilliant will be the reflection,—the heavier the trial, the sweeter the promise; for amid God's most mysterious dealings, you may discover marks of His power, His love, and his faithfulness.

There are views of Christ, which can only be obtained, beneath a cloudy sky, and amidst many showers of tears. Believer, strive, when the darkness begins to gather round you, to look *upwards*, and *soon*, reviving faith will discover the "Bow of promise;" the storm will be hushed,—the lowering, portentous clouds will roll away, and you will take up the language of the psalmist.—"Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the *heavens*, and Thy faithfulness reacheth unto the *clouds*."

Think, too, of that glorious day, when there shall be a serene and cloudless sky,—a sky, which can no more become darkened and obscured,—when you will not need this *emblem*, for you will have the *reality* of God's faithfulness and love.

Here, you have no bow without a cloud, But then shall rise that glorious Sun which shall never set, whose radiant beams shall no more be broken by misty shadows. Soon, believer, throughout eternity's calm brightness, you will gaze upon the Bow of your Redeemer's glory; and, as you gaze, you will shine, even as He shines. For "we shall be like Him, when we shall see Him as He is."

"O God of all grace and mercy, who art able to supply every loss, to heal every wound, to dry up every tear, and to dispel every cloud: Grant, that when my sorrows abound, my consolations may much more abound. May I be still and know that Thou art God, acknowledging Thy right to do with me as Thou wilt, and confiding in the wisdom and goodness of Thy dispensations."—*The Pathway of Promise.*

He Giveth His Beloved Sleep:

Of all the thoughts of God that are
Borne inward unto souls afar
Along the Psalmist's music deep,
Now tell me if that any is
For gift of grace surpassing this—
"He giveth His beloved sleep?"

What would ye give to our beloved?
The hero's heart to be unmoved,
The poet's star-tuned harp to sweep,
The patriot's voice to teach and rouse,
The monarch's crown to light the brows?
"He giveth His beloved sleep."

What do we give to our beloved?
A little faith all undisproved,
A little dust to oversweep,
And bitter memories to make
The whole earth blasted for our sake?
"He giveth His beloved sleep."

"Sleep soft, beloved!" we sometimes say,
But have no tune to charm away
Sad dreams that through the eyelids creep:
But never doleful dream again
Shall break the happy slumber, when
"He giveth His beloved sleep."

O earth, so full of dreary noises!
O men, with wailing in your voices!
O dived gold, the wailer's heap!
O strife! Oh curse that o'er it fall!
God makes a silence through you all,
And "giveth His beloved sleep."

For me, my heart that erst did go,
Most like a tired child at a show,
That sees through tears the juggler's leap,
Would now its weaned vision close,
Would childlike on His love repose,
Who "giveth His beloved sleep."

And friends, dear friends,—when it shall be
That this low breath is gone from me,
And round my bier you come to weep,
Let One, most loving of you all,
Say, "Not a tear must o'er her fall—
He giveth His beloved sleep."

MRS. BROWNING.

TREAT YOURSELF AS YOU TREAT OTHERS.

Treat yourselves, my dear friends, as you have been accustomed to treat others. We get another man's character and tie it up to the halberds, and out with our great whip and begin to lay it on with all our force, and after the flogging we wash the poor creature with a kind of briny pretence at excusing his sins. Ah, just serve thyself so.—Tie thyself up to the halberds, man, and lay on the whip. Do not spare him. When you have got yourself tied up, hit hard, sir; it is a great rascal you are whipping. Now then, a heavy blow! Kill him if you can. The sooner he is dead the better; for when he is once killed as to all idea of righteousness in himself, then he will

begin to lead a new life and be a new creature in Christ Jesus. Make him feel that the leprosy lies deep within. Give him no rest. Treat him as cruelly as he could treat another. 'T would be only his deserts.

But who is this I am telling you to treat so?—*Yourself, my hearer yourself.* Be as severe as you can, but let the culprit be yourself. Put on the wig, and sit upon the judgment-seat. Read the king's commission. There is such a commission for you to be a Judge. It says, Judge thyself—though it says, Judge not others. Put on, I say, your robes; sit up there, and then bring on the culprit. Make him stand at the bar. Accuse him; plead against him; condemn him. Say, "Take him away, jailor!" Find out the hardest punishment you can discover in the statute book, and believe that he deserves it all. Be as severe as ever you can on yourself, even to the putting on the black cap, and reading the sentence of death.

When you have done this you will be in a hopeful way for life, for he that condemns himself God absolves. He that stands self-convicted may look to Christ hanging on the cross, and see himself hanging there, and see his sins for ever put away by the sacrifice of Jesus on the tree.—C. H. Spurgeon.

DEISM.

Natural religion is decidedly against nature.—When, in bewilderment, I have seen through its three or four merciless dogmas; when I have passed a few moments at the bottom of this ice-house, I feel an irrepresible want of light and heat again. I must love, and I must feel myself loved. What would I do with your Supreme Being, your immoveable Creator, to whom I owe my life (and what a life!), and who is waiting on me with his balances? I am a sinner; how will you change me? I am sick; how will you heal me? I am condemned; how will you deliver me? I seek a heavenly Father; what have you done with him? I would wish to pray; what becomes of prayer in your system? These griefs, these injustices in me and out of me, agitate and overwhelm me; what solution do you give me of these problems? These are the only questions worth solving, and you leave them unanswered! I wander confounded among your deserts, finding nowhere the two great Christian solutions—The Fall and Salvation. It is truly the moment to cry with many, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." And without the Saviour, what an indescribable solitude is created around us! If there are only laws; if there is neither Father, nor Son, nor Holy Spirit; if all intercourse between heaven and earth is interrupted; if the supernatural in Providence has disappeared; if it be not true that the angels ascend and descend, then Oh! what a horrible silence in the whole creation! Your telescopes have extended its limits; you have discovered more worlds; you have obtained a glimpse of nebulae, where myriads of suns and worlds larger than ours travel in space! Well, so much the worse! The regions you thus people are only the more empty; these myriads of worlds do not make up for the least breath of sympathy and love! Give me back one word of restoration, one word of the Gospel!—Deliver my nature from your natural religion, and I will feel at ease—at home in the midst of this magnificent creation. I will once more see clear, and my heart will beat!—*Courts de Gasparin.*

THE BAD HALF-CROWN.

A few months ago, while waiting for my ticket in a country railway office, I observed a half-crown nailed to the counter. The young man who was giving out the tickets also attracted my attention. He seemed a sharp youth, and had an air of importance about him, becoming the responsibilities of his office. With his hand raised to the ticket department, and the finger ready to pounce upon the right one, he shouted, "First or second, sir?"

Being the last one that was then waiting, I thought that I should like to have a few words with our young friend about the half-crown, so I said to him as I was picking up my change, "What is this you have got nailed to the counter?"

"A half-crown, sir."

"But why have you it nailed to the counter?"

"Because it is a bad one, sir."

"So you were determined it should go no further. But now, tell me, does it remind you of anything very serious?"

"I don't know," (looking very straight at me and paying great attention.)

"Well, I'll tell you what it has brought to my mind—that will be the end of all false and unholy professors, they will at last be nailed down under the awful judgment of God. And they will never be able to get away from it. Now, *you* look at that half-crown. A nail driven through it—fixed to the one spot, and exposed to public condemnation. Every one sees that it is a detected hypocrite, and exhibited there as a warning to others."

"Now, mark, such will be the end of all who make a profession of religion, but who have not Christ in their hearts. Like that half-crown, they may deceive many for a time, but they cannot deceive God, can they? O, no! that half-crown may have passed through a good many hands before it was detected, but at last it fell into the hands of a judge who knew that it was not real, and so condemned it, and would let it go no further. And now, *you* remember this, God will try every professor at his judgment-seat; and every one that is counterfeit, not real, will then be detected, condemned, and nailed to the place of judgment for ever; so that every time you throw down a ticket, and look on this bad half-

crown, you are reminded of the awful end of those who are not right in heart with God."

This last sentence was evidently more than our young friend could comfortably bear, for he immediately exclaimed, with his usual sharpness, "I'LL HAVE IT TAKEN UP." After a few words of warning as to the certainty of coming judgment, we parted.

Finding we had to wait a little for the train, a friend who was with me, and who had listened to the conversation, returned to the office, and without saying a word to the lad, he merely gave him a look, pointing to the half-crown, when the youth said in a very determined tone, "I'll have it taken up."

How like, thought I, to the natural heart. "I'll have it taken up." It had been nailed there for the purpose of warning others against passing bad money, lest they might be detected and brought to judgment. But as soon as it was made, to bear as a warning for his own conscience before God, he immediately declared that he would have it removed. Rather than be reminded of the fearful end of those who have not Christ as their righteousness, he would silence the testimony by removing the witness. But ah! what a poor, self-deceiving way this is of getting rid of a present difficulty. The future trouble remains. Yet, alas! how constantly this is done both by young and old.

Most in our day, and perhaps all who read this,—know that no man can stand approved before God in his own righteousness. He may have been, touching the outward letter of the law blameless, but when tried by God's standard, he will surely be found deficient, disapproved, and rejected.

The best things we have, or can produce, are totally rejected as utterly unfit for God, and for the place of his holiness. Fair appearances there may be, and that which will pass among men as genuine enough for any one. But God looks on the heart. He has but one standard. He looks for Christ. He tests the heart's estimate of Him. If that dear name be found engraven on its tablets as its all in all, it will surely pass as the genuine current coin of the realm of heaven. But, oh! where Christ is not the stamp of the heart, all is utterly

worthless to God. If he fills it not, it must be empty indeed, whatever else may be in it. If there be no Christ in the heart, there can be no pardon, no peace, no salvation, no eternal life.

I observed that the bad half-crown had a shining face like the good ones, and, outwardly, it had the same stamp upon it. But at heart it was bad, there was no silver there. Only base metal. It was a hypocrite—a mere professor. It pretended to be what it was not. It had a fair outward appearance, but no reality in heart. I observed, further, that the nail of judgment pierced both the head and the heart. Mournful illustration of the seat of the thoughts—the understanding—the will—the desires—the affections and passions, being penetrated with the iron rod of God's sore displeasure. Oh! is such, in very deed, the end of the mere formalist? Unquestionably; and of all Christless, graceless, souls. The righteousness of God must judge evil. But I also further thought, will the wicked at last be fixed to one place? The doomed half-crown could not move an hair's breadth. How monotonous—how ignominious! Affixed to one spot, a public spectacle. Labelled, "A once shining professor, but now a detected, dishonoured, doomed, deceiver." But oh! thought I, shall it be thus at last with all who have no true interest in Christ, professors or not professors? Most assuredly. The word of truth has gone forth from the lips of Him who cannot change. It stands recorded in the statute book of heaven. And it runs, and may my reader mark it well. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."—John iii. 36.

My mind now turned to a case in point, To one who made a great profession. I mean the man who had not on the wedding garment—(Matt. xxii.) It does not appear from the parable that any of the guests thought that he was different from themselves, so thoroughly had the reality been imitated. And so it is now. Immense numbers in the present day make a profession of religion, of whom no man on earth could feel quite certain as to whether they were real, or merely formal Christians. Their lives are strictly moral, they regularly attend some place of worship, they give of their

money for church, mission, and benevolent purposes; they sing psalms and hymns as sweetly as any one. They read the scriptures, pray and preach, it may be in public, and yet when the unmistakable signs of divine life in the soul are looked for, the search is in vain. We have to leave such cases, thankful that we are not their judges, until the Lord come.

Such seems to have been the case in the parable. He may have occupied a high place amongst professors. But there was no cleaving of the heart to Christ, and trusting in Him alone. He was a stranger to the love and grace of God in Christ Jesus. He was a rejector of grace, and man is saved by grace alone, through faith, without works of law.

But though he had succeeded in deceiving the guests, he could not deceive the king. "And when the king came in to see the guests he saw there was a man which had not on a wedding garment; and he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment? and he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Alas, alas! what a close to a long life of high-sounding profession? What an end for one who has had a high place in the church on earth. And, alas, for all who have not Christ. Bound hand and foot, and cast into the place of judgment. Now, he must lie where he falls. He must abide in the place wherein he is cast. There was a time when he was determined to have his own will, and to enjoy his own way, in spite of every warning. But now he is nailed to the one spot. He can have his own will and his own way no longer. Wrapped in the vile and worthless rags of his own evil ways, he is cast outside the presence chamber of the king, and has no means of resisting the righteous, but fearful judgment that he has brought upon himself. Oh! that careless, thoughtless sinners, and mere nominal professors would think on these awful realities now, and take warning. The time is fast coming when it may be too late. Soon shall all who now dwell on the earth have to take their respective places, either in the bright and sunny regions of

eternal glory, or in the dark dungeon of eternal woe.

The scriptures are plain and absolute. God is righteous, and He can approve of nothing less righteous than Himself. He is the only true God, and can accept of nothing less true than Himself. He has but one standard, and Christ alone is up to his measure. Nothing will pass as current at the judgment-seat that has not the name of Christ stamped upon it. The sinner can only be received, approved, and justified in the worthiness of Christ. He is the way, the truth, and the life. No man can come unto the Father but by Him. He is the door, the only way of entrance into the Father's house.

Reader, whether you have made a profession or not, at once, with your whole heart, turn to Jesus, in the full assurance of His pardoning love. Be assured that he is waiting, ready to receive you. Oh! doubt him not—believe Him—trust Him. He is able—He is willing—to save the chief of sinners. At once, without delay, flee to the arms of Jesus. Flee from your evil habits, and from the awful doom of outer darkness. As a lost sinner, take refuge in Him who was *nailed* to the cross for sinners.

"Sins they were, not nails, which held Him, Sinner, there He died for thee."

He wore a crown of thorns, emblems of the curse of sin, that sinners might wear a crown of glory—fruit of grace divine. His side was pierced with a soldier's spear, that sinners might find a resting place in His heart for ever. He bore the judgment of God against sin, that sinners might enjoy an eternal weight of glory. Oh! then, be careless no longer—slight the Saviour of sinners no longer. Believe in Him, according to the word of God. But, oh! see that you believe *now*. Can you lie down to sleep another night, with all your sins upon your soul? Surely not. Look to Jesus, and your eyes shall be enlightened, your burden removed. "To him give all the prophets witness, that *through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.*" Acts x. 43.—*C. H. M.*

THE SEED FOR NEW ENGLAND.—God sifted three nations that He might sow New England with the finest of the wheat.—*Life of Whitefield.*

BACKSLIDER, COME TO JESUS.

Yours is a peculiar case; for you have already come to Jesus, but have wandered from Him. You have been near, but now you are afar off. Your sin is very great. You have experienced something of the love of Christ, yet have forsaken Him. You have enjoyed clearer light and greater advantages than those who have never known what religion is. You have been admitted within the fold, and tasted the sweet pasture with which the good Shepherd feeds his flock, yet you have strayed from the sacred enclosure. Your declension began perhaps in secret, by restraining prayer, and neglecting God's Word. Or you yielded to some temptation, but did not go to Christ for pardon, and so you became gradually careless. You may still maintain an outward profession of piety, but your heart is not right in the sight of God. Perhaps you have plunged into worldly dissipations, and are an example of the saying, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Perhaps even worse, you have fallen into open sin, and brought public disgrace on the name of Christian. You have lost all those opportunities of doing good which, had you not been a backslider, you would have improved. Thus you have robbed God. You have discouraged other professors by your coldness and inconsistency, and been a hinderance to many who were inquiring, "What must I do to be saved?" Instead of being a blessing to others, you have been a curse. And what is more, you have grieved the Holy Spirit, have crucified the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame. Yet Jesus, the kind Shepherd whose fold you have left, is willing to welcome you back. He seeks the sheep that has gone astray. He says, "O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God. Say unto Him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously. I will heal their backslidings, I will love them freely; for mine anger is turned away. Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backsliding, for I am merciful. Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God. Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord."

Consider these kind words. Ponder well the parable of the prodigal son. What greater encouragement can you need? Though you have wandered from Jesus, you may come to him again. He is as willing to receive you as at first. Stop, then, in your backward career. Return unto the Lord; for "why will ye die?"

See Psalm cxix. 176; Jer. iii. 12-14, 22; Hosea xiv. 1-4; Luke xv.

MINISTERIAL POWER.

There are some truths of the highest practical importance both to pastors and to the churches to which they minister, which though professedly believed in by all, are nevertheless in perpetual danger of passing down into that low and unfruitful state which is practically equivalent to skepticism. No one, for example, among orthodox Christians, professes to hold that a man is fit to preach Christ who is not thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Christ. Graces of culture, intellectual attainments, all the arts of oratory and powers of human wisdom, are in theory justly placed far below those higher attainments which it is the office of the Holy Spirit to bestow. It is undeniable, however, that simultaneously with the immense benefits which colleges and theological seminaries have conferred, there has crept in more or less of a subtle spirit of unbelief in these very truths. From the fact that the course of training pursued is essentially a critical and intellectual one, young men assembled there are naturally inclined to debate opinions, measure capacities, and applaud demonstrations of ability, genius, and rhetorical and scholastic skill, rather than those of spiritual gifts and graces, which, however little they may be calculated to secure the praises of men, are nevertheless counted highest in the scale of attainments which find favor with God.

This inclination to look too much upon the human side of preaching, unconsciously affects the best of us. Go into any gathering of preachers, and the chances are that you will hear the ability or intellectual attainments of this or that minister discussed, his sermons criticised, his theological opinions passed under review, or his chances for this or that pulpit canvassed, perhaps ungenerously considered. So, too, in the churches. An over-weening reliance upon the graces of culture and the industry of human wisdom often lurks in the hearts and influences the action of those who would in theory repudiate such an unscriptural confidence. Consciously or unconsciously, the belief that a man will carry weight as a powerful minister of the New Testament in proportion to his talents and accomplishments, influences, far more than the Word of God will warrant, both

the action of churches in the choice of their pastors, and that of congregations in their support.

A Christian preacher is of course a public speaker. Whatever contributes to render him a better workman in the art and mystery of eloquence is legitimate. Graces of style, as well as intellectual attainments of every sort, contribute to success, and are therefore desirable. Like the speaker on the political platform, or at the bar, his business is to persuade men, and all the gifts and acquirements which make up the successful orator in other spheres of life, are equally needful and proper on the part of one whose solemn office it is to urge the great truths of Christianity upon the hearts and consciences of men.

The error into which worldly men, and not a few in our churches are perpetually falling, is in going no further than this: in supposing that a well trained understanding, a good rhetoric, a pleasant voice, and a capacity for pungent, energetic expression, is the principal thing; and in failing to take due account of those higher sources of spiritual power, without which all the ministrations of the pulpit are empty and vain. The Scriptural conception of the mission of the minister of Christ supposes that the attainments of the natural understanding are entirely subordinate to those of the heart. Christ must be present in the soul, the life of life, the light which shines through and makes luminous the whole substance of the preacher's character and acts. This is the treasure which is committed to earthen vessels, which confers a divinity upon the humblest, and without which all the graces of rhetoric and the attainments of the schools, are merely the "poor dumb mouths" that speak to us from the mantle of an ambitious, but dead and pulseless formalism.

The belief, in which the most successful preachers and the holiest men of all ages have shared, is significantly set forth by the Apostle Paul. In his own personal experience he indicates his conception of the true source of ministerial power. It was not to his fine rhetoric, his eloquence, or his logical skill, that he himself was accustomed to attribute his success. "My speech and my preaching," he declares, "was not with persuasive words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power."

Again, "I labored more abundantly than they all—yet not I, but the grace of God which was in me." So through all the writings of the Apostle, the preacher of the Gospel is represented as a man whose sublime mission it is to be so occupied and possessed by the teaching and life of Christ, that his own life and teaching shall prove a perpetual witness and demonstration of the Spirit's power.

The history of Christian progress has been perfectly in accordance with this conception of the mission and work of the minister of the Gospel. "It is not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit saith the Lord." The whole history of the church has been one continuous demonstration of the truth that God has "chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty." How often do we see a man whom the world calls a very ordinary preacher, "slow of speech," and whose "bodily presence" is, in the view of many "contempible," but who, nevertheless, is so imbued with the graces of love and zealous devotion as to be a powerful minister of the New Testament. Who has not noticed how a few plain words, spoken out of a living faith, without ostentation or any of the graces of rhetoric, have often more power to move the soul than the most elaborately eloquent appeals? Here is something which no scholastic drill, or power in dogmatic theology, or fine speaking can confer. We must go back for it humbly to that ultimate source of spiritual efficiency, a knowledge of Christ, which is immediate and present, which lives in us an acting and vital force, which teaches us to die to self and to live in the fulness and completeness of the power of the Highest.—*Michigan Christian Herald*.

IMMANUEL.

God for ever dwells near, or is moving upon, or around, those that he loves, and that have opened their souls to him, though the consciousness of his presence intermits with them.

But where, from frequent recognition of it, the conviction grows that there is this presence of God with us, and that there is such communion between God's soul and

ours that we are every day moving in the circuit of his thoughts and feelings, consider what courage it gives, and what patience to endure trouble. There is nothing like the consciousness of *Immanuel* for men that are fighting the battle of life. Give me, of all mottoes, "God with me." Oh, that I might write it on my child's cradle—"Immanuel: God with us." Oh, that I might write it over the threshold of my child's entrance into wedded life—"Immanuel: God with us." Oh, that I might write upon the garments that my child wears, so that they should flame all over, to the eye of faith, the motto—"Immanuel: God with us." Oh, that I might write it on every single book and task—"God with us." Oh, that it might be inscribed on every fear and sorrow—"God with us." I would see gleaming in the first light of the morning, those words—"God with us." And at evening, when the sun goes in glory to his rest, I would have borne back to my eyes upon its last rays the same words—"God with us." And in the silence of the night I would have running through my mind the thought of "God with us." Always and everywhere I would have for my motto, "Immanuel! Immanuel! Immanuel!" And every man who has it for his motto will feel, "What lack I? What do I need? If God be for us, who can be against us?" And what power, what joy, what inspiration to nobleness, comes with this consideration, when it has become familiarized and domiciled!

There are many who object to this sacred truth; but it will be found that those who object to it are persons that have never felt it. Let us spend a few moments in answering the objections that are brought against it.

It is said that it will not bear the tests of calm, scientific investigation. It is said that a man trained to require that evidence which science requires, would never concede that there was any such facts as the presence of the divine mind upon the human mind. My reply is, that science is not yet in a condition to test interior religious questions. Science is yet busy with the shell of the nut. It has not touched the kernel at all. There is no test, as yet, of science, by which you can measure this thing. And besides, no science can ever

interfere between a man and his own consciousness. You might tell me that it was not possible for me to be happy in hearing an instrument of music; and yet I might affirm that in nothing was I more happy. I might say to a Scotchman, "I do not believe it is possible that a man should take pleasure in the presence of a bagpipe,"—and I think so; and yet he might say, "There is no sound on earth that fills my soul with such pleasure as the sound of that instrument." I have nothing more to say, if he bears that witness. If that is the testimony of his inward consciousness, cannot convict him. His consciousness stands against all reasonings and tests. If a man says, "I think," you cannot disprove his thinking. If a man says, "I feel," you cannot disprove his feeling. If a man says, "I am conscious," you cannot disprove his consciousness. And where a man says, "I am conscious that God touches me; I am conscious that from God an influence, an inspiration, an in-breathing, an empowering, comes to me, which causes my soul to mount up and kindle within me"—where a man says that, no tests can discredit it.

And I appeal, not to the voice of the church speaking in articles of faith, but to thousand living Christians, who say, "It is by the presence of God with me that I have been able to maintain my hold on life." I think I may say, without fear of exaggeration, that there are a hundred persons in this church to-day, who can say, "If Christ had not abided with me, I should many and many a time have stumbled." Hundreds of times I have heard the grateful testimony, (than which there cannot be a nobler confession,) "Without the presence of God I could have done nothing; with it I can do all things." It is the soul's witness.

But it is said that this is a mere enthusiasm or fanaticism. I reply that it certainly is not a fanaticism which is always narrow, intense, hard, disturbing. It is the very reverse of this. It may be an enthusiasm, because the term enthusiasm means, or originally meant, the state produced by the God in us. It comes from words signifying, "The God in us." And when the old priestesses and prophets, stirred by the Holy Ghost, prophesied, they were said to have God in them. And when you say

that this consciousness of the presence of God is enthusiasm, I say so too. That is the very doctrine—the God in us; the Spirit in us.

But it is said, "Although there may have been single cases of conscious recognition of the presence of God, it is not to be preached as a doctrine for the whole brotherhood. It is, like a prophecy, or apostleship, peculiar to the few, and not to the many." I reply, that this indwelling of God's Spirit is ordained, especially and expressly for the whole. Like everything else, it comes more easily and fully to some than to others. Gifts of poetry, gifts of language, gifts of skill, gifts of affection, all the fundamental feelings, and the products of them, are distributed variously; and it is true that some persons rise up more easily into a consciousness of the divine presence than other persons; but in his own measure it is the gift of every one that is born into the kingdom of Christ. In other words, I declare your sorship to you. I announce to you that you may every one, evermore be in the conscious presence of your Father.—*Beecher.*

WHEN ?

When shall I see the day
That ends my woes;
When shall I victory gain
O'er all my foes;
When will the trumpet sound
That calls the exiles home,
The grand, sabbatic year,
When will it come ?

A crown of glory bright,
By faith I see,
In yonder realms of light,
I prepared for me,
O may I faithful prove,
And keep the prize in view;
And through the storms of life
My way pursue.

Jesus, be thou my guide,
My steps attend;
O keep me near thy side,
Be thou my friend;
Be thou my shield and sun,
My Saviour and my guard;
And when my work is done,
My great reward.

O how I long to see
That happy day,
When sorrow, sin, and pain,
Shall flee away;
When all the heavenly tribes
Shall find their long sought home!
The Jubilee of Heaven,
When will it come ?

THE POWER OF KINDNESS.

"Tom! Here!" said a father to his boy, speaking in tones of authority.

The lad was at play. He looked towards his father, but did not leave his companions.

"Do you hear, sir!" spoke the father, more sternly than at first.

With an unhappy face and reluctant step, the boy left his play and approached his parent.

"Why do you creep along at a snail's pace," said the latter, angrily; "Come quickly! I want you. When I speak I look to be obeyed instantly. Here, take this note to Mr. Smith, and see that you don't go to sleep by the way. Now run as fast as you can go."

The boy took the note. There was a cloud upon his brow. He moved away, but at a slow pace.

"You, Tom! Is that doing as I ordered? Is that going quickly?" called the father, when he saw the boy creeping away.

"If you are not back in half an hour, I will punish you."

But words had little effect. The boy's feelings were hurt by the unkindness of the parent. He experienced a sense of injustice—a consciousness that wrong had been done him. By nature he was like his father, proud and stubborn; and these qualities of his mind were aroused, and he indulged in them, fearless of consequences.

"I never saw such a boy," said the father, speaking to a friend who had observed the occurrences. "My words make scarcely any impression on him."

"Kind words are often most powerful," said the friend.

The father looked surprised.

"Kind words," continued the friend, "are like the gentle rain, and refreshing dews; but harsh words bend and break like the angry tempest. The first develop and strengthen good affections, while the other sweep over the heart in devastation, and mar and deform all they touch. Try him with kind words. They will prove a hundredfold more powerful."

The father seemed hurt by this reproof; but it left him thoughtful. An hour passed ere his boy returned. At times during his absence he was angry at the delay, and meditated the infliction of punish-

ment; but the words of remonstrance were in his ears, and he resolved to obey them. At last the lad came slowly in, with a cloudy countenance, and reported the result of his errand. Having stayed far beyond his time, he looked for punishment, and was prepared to receive it in a spirit of angry defiance. To his surprise, after delivering the message he had brought, his father, instead of an angry reproof and punishment, said kindly, "Very well, my son. You can go to your play again."

The boy went out, but was not happy. He had disobeyed and disobliged his father, and the thought of this troubled him.—Harsh words had not clouded his mind nor aroused a spirit of reckless anger. Instead of joining his companions, he went and sat down by himself, grieving over his act of disobedience. As he sat thus, he heard his name called. He listened!

"Thomas, my son," said his father kindly. The boy sprang to his feet, and was almost instantly beside his parent.

"Did you call, father?"

"I did, my son. Will you take this package to Mr. Long for me?"

There was no hesitation in the boy's manner. He looked pleased at the thought of doing his father a service, and reached out his hand for the package. On receiving it, he bounded away with a light step.

"There is a power in kindness," said the father, as he sat musing, after the lad's departure. And even while he sat musing over the incident, the boy came back, and with a cheerful, happy face said,

"Can I do anything else for you, father?"

Yes, there is power in kindness. The tempest of passion can only subdue, constrain, and break; but in love and gentleness there is the power of the summer rain, the dew, and the sunshine.

Whosoever dealeth with God or man about the sins of others, should look well, in the first place, into his own. The high priest was to take care about, and first to offer for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. And they who follow not this method will miscarry in their work.—It is the greatest evidence of hypocrisy, for men to be severe towards the sins of others and careless about their own.—Owen.

THE GOOD NEWS.

MAY 1st, 1862.

BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT.

MATTHEW V. 3.

It is told in story that Austin of Hippo was once asked what was the first step in religion? He replied, humility. What the second? Humility. What the third? Humility. According to him, humility was the cardinal grace, the one from which all others spring. According to Christ, humility is the same. It is here called poverty of spirit. It is the thing which, if a man hath, he is blessed, for his is the kingdom of heaven. Now observe—

1st. THAT POVERTY OF SPIRIT DOES NOT CONSIST IN POVERTY OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

The poor we have always with us, and poverty is the legacy that some have as long as they live in the world, but we often find that those who are poor as Lazarus are proud as Lucifer. This is to be seen in the way young men and maidens of limited income dress. This is to be seen in the presumption of the poor who strive, by using all means, by employing all arts, to appear so much better than they really are, and by their speaking and acting with an improper spirit towards those who are more exalted in station, and better in circumstances than themselves. They, moreover, think that the pinchings of poverty here are but a preparation for another world, where the tables will be turned, and those who are now at the top will descend to the bottom, and those at the bottom will be exalted to a pre-eminence which their present position entitles them to enjoy. But just as pride may be clothed in rags, so poverty of spirit may be found in the possessor of untold wealth. It may be in the breast of the peer as well as in that of the peasant. It may be with the lord of the

manor, as well as with the tenant who inhabits the lonely hut on the outskirts of some moor. It may be with the wealthy merchant whose name is familiar on change, as well as with the humblest man in his employ.

Observe,—2. THAT POVERTY OF SPIRIT DOES NOT CONSIST IN VOLUNTARY POVERTY.

It is told in ancient story that Diogenes the sage, noted for his contempt of human pride, and the forms in which society expressed their preferences, on one occasion went to dine with Plato. An ample tablecloth hung lavishly over the table, and rested upon the floor. This Diogenes observed, and characteristic of himself, he stamped upon it with his foot, and said, "I trample on the pride of Plato." Plato, with a ready repartee, observed, "With greater pride, Diogenes." Diogenes is a forcible and well-known illustration of the pride of humility. Ignorant of himself, he put on the garb of poverty, and deemed himself humble. He was a victim to a delusion that misleads many. The appearance of humility is not necessarily humility. The making ourselves poor is not poverty of spirit. There may be pride in the garb of humility. There may be arrogance in leaving the abodes of refinement and civilization, to dwell in the cloister. There may be an assumption of superior sanctity in the stand-back garb which some see fit to wear as expressive of their renunciation of the world, and the allurements of it. Be not deceived. Pride can dwell in a cloister. Ambition can be rampant under a cowl, and the deepest schemes for the possession of worldly wealth can be under the most complete appearance of disregard for it.

Observe again — THAT POVERTY OF SPIRIT IS NOT MEANNESS, NOR COWARDICE.

Some men who are bold, blustering and boisterous when there is no danger, are cowardly when danger draweth nigh.

"They fight and run away
That they may live to fight another day."

Some who are large in the presence of their inferiors, grow gradually down to smaller dimensions in the presence of their superiors. These are the class that despots belong to, who love to rule with a rod of iron over the young, the poor, and the feeble—over all within the compass of their power. These are cowards. They can't look an honest man in the face, and when an honest man looks at them their head hangs down, their eye is askance, and they glance by stealth. They are the tiger breed in society, who can be of some use in subjection, but always wound and destroy when their instincts get play; and they are to be found not only on some despotic throne where the subjects are galled with a thousand oppressions, but in every mixed community. They are to be found in husbands who, though the stronger vessel, employs his strength to tease, to worry, and to vex the one he has sworn to cherish and protect. They are to be found among masters, who, having the control of work which hundreds are glad to take, use their privilege to tyrannize in trifles, and to wound the spirit of those who cannot do better than submit. They are to be found in every walk of life, in every class of society, the fertile causes of the thousand petty annoyances and disagreeables that man meets with in his intercourse with man. They are not the poor in spirit, for whom are reserved the kingdom of heaven.

WHAT IT IS.

We have indicated what poverty of spirit is not. We now say that poverty of spirit is a gracious disposition of soul, the operation of the Holy Spirit, in which we are emptied of self, in order to being filled with Jesus Christ, and manifests itself—

By a sense of unworthiness in the sight of God and man.

We are all poor in respect of God and

Divine things. We are destitute of everything that can commend us to God. We are without righteousness, without holiness, without strength, without wisdom. Not only so, but we are deep in sin, having transgressed God's law, times and ways without number. But by nature we are not aware of this. We think ourselves rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing, when we are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

Now, when the Holy Spirit operates upon our soul—when he opens the eyes of our mind that we may see ourselves, and when he unlocks the fastenings of our hearts, that the rays of divine light may reveal the hidden darkness within, then we see our own vileness, our own unworthiness, the sins we have committed, the duties we have omitted: and, however exalted we may have appeared in our own eyes in times past—however estimable we were regarded by others, we feel that

"We are but poor sinners, and nothing at all."

We feel that we have lost all merit in the sight of God, and if we receive salvation, it must be in and through the merits of Jesus alone.

It is different with the proud in spirit. They perform their round of duties, they go to church, read their prayers, and fulfil the external requirements of the gospel, thus they think that their good works will open a way to heaven. Some of them say they have done nobody any harm, they have paid their honest debts, they are at enmity with no one, so they think they will be sure to enter heaven. Some admit that they are but imperfect souls. They acknowledge that they have the faults and failings of frail humanity, but in the following breath will say that there is something good about them after all. But the poor in spirit have lost all claims to goodness. They look only at the merits of Jesus. The name of Jesus is the most sweet to them. The Cross of

Jesus is the most dear to them, for He has died for them.

They say I am but a poor sinner, and nothing at all,

But Jesus is my all and all.

The different characters of the poor and proud in spirit, is well illustrated in the parable of the publican and pharisee:—

One doth his righteousness proclaim,
The other owns his guilt and shame;
This man at humble distance stands,
And cries for grace with lifted hands:
That boldly rises near the throne,
And talks of duties he has done.
The Lord their different language knows,
And different answers he bestows,—
The humble soul with grace he crowns,
Whilst on the proud his anger frowns.

But not only are the poor in spirit conscious that they receive salvation through the righteousness of Christ, they are also conscious that they are made meet for enjoying it by the sanctifying operations of the Holy Spirit. They know "that in them, that is, in their flesh, there dwelleth no good thing." They know that not only do the stains of sin upon their soul require to be washed out, but the corrupt tendency of their heart remains to be eradicated. Hence their earnest supplications are, "Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean, wash me and I shall be whiter than snow. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." When they talk with their fellow-saints, they are not afraid to acknowledge their own vileness, and hesitate not to conceal that at the best they are unworthy servants,

It is not so with the proud in spirit.— They look only on the outward appearance, They study only what is outwardly right and decorous, and if they are but free from speck of stain of sin, so far as they themselves can perceive, they plume themselves on their perfection, and doubt not but they shall in due time enter into heaven. They can not acknowledge that they are sinners in the sight of God. The slightest suspicion of the kind against them would

be regarded as an insult. It would be repelled as a slur upon them and they would say with Hazael, "Am I a dog, that I should do so and so." The poor in spirit have eyes that see no good in themselves. They see only good in Christ. They see no beauty in themselves. They see it only in Christ. They see not how they can be fit for heaven, but by the spirit cleansing them from all sin, and working in them all the needed graces.

The poor in spirit are not only conscious of receiving salvation through Christ, and sanctification by the Holy Spirit, they are also conscious that they are *preserved* every moment by the power and the providence of God. Hence their prayers, morning, noon, and night. Hence their thanksgivings. Hence their songs of gratitude. Hence in the hour of trouble they call upon God. Hence, in the hour of perplexity they seek His counsel. It is not so, however, with the proud in spirit. If they have anything, they do not acknowledge that they got it from God. If they make anything, they say their own right hand hath secured it for them. However much they receive, they return God nothing in kind. They draw in God's pure air, and breathe it out defiled with curses. They partake of God's bounty from day to day, and they never bend the knee to acknowledge the reception, nor lift up the voice to implore a blessing upon them. They are practical infidels. Living without God and without hope in the world. How different are they from the poor in spirit, who say they are nothing, they have nothing, and can do nothing but by the power and permission of their God.

This poverty of spirit is manifested by a spirit of contentment in the situation of life in which the individual is placed. This is not the character of the proud in spirit.— They are all more or less dissatisfied with their condition. If they are inferior to their neighbours they chafe, and fret, and worry

and are discontented till, by some means or another, they reach the goal of their ambition. If they do reach their expected position, are they happy then? Are their desires satisfied with their possessions?—No. They are as dissatisfied as ever, and if they should gain the whole world, they would sit down like Alexander and weep because they had no more worlds to conquer. But the poor in spirit, conscious that they deserve nothing, if they get anything at all they are sure to say that it is more than they deserve. With gratitude they receive what they get and if it is taken away, they can cheerfully submit and say, the Lord gave, and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord. If their circumstances are mean and poor they are patient and thankful. If they are rich and noble, they allow not their heart to depend on such distinctions. If their circumstances are against them, they say its all for the best, for all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. If their lot is in the midst of affliction they say, "Though no affliction for the moment is joyous, but grievous, nevertheless, afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness." And he says, "These light afflictions which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding, yea an eternal weight of glory."

ARE ON A COMMON LEVEL.

The poor in spirit are all of one rank. The operations of the Holy Spirit, level all men to one degree. The prince is reduced to the same sense of nothingness and vileness as the peasant. He stands on the same ground, walks in the same way, enters heaven by the same door, and is judged by the same standard. He manifests his christian life in the same manner, Rests on the same promises, and enjoys the same prospects. This community of experience produces harmony of action among those who

are socially distinct. Before a change was wrought upon the superior in talent and exalted in position, they were puffed up with pride, and looked down with scorn and contempt upon many of those beneath them. But when the change took place in them, the change was marked by a difference in the treatment of others, and specially if these others were believers in the same Lord. However humble in station they regard them as brethren. As fellow-heirs of the same glorious inheritance. As enjoying the same prospects, as holding the same promises, as animated by joys and sorrows of a kindred kind, and instead of regarding them as beneath them, they were glad to esteem each other better than themselves.

Though this is the true characteristic of the poor in spirit, it is lamentably true, that those who profess to be poor in spirit do not always manifest this trait. Inward corruption breaks out in the form of esteeming *themselves* better than others. If their fellow-men are as useful, or as talented, or as famous, or more so, they depreciate them in their character or their work. If they are more exalted than themselves, they do what they can to bring them down to their own level. Thinking that by lowering them, they are exalting themselves. This is not the characteristic that is blessed in itself, nor the characteristic of the man that has the promise of the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Theirs is, not theirs shall be. Theirs is. They have it now in possession. *Now* are they the children of God. "It doth not yet appear what they shall be, but when Christ shall appear, they shall be like him for they shall see him as he is."

Theirs is now, for the God of heaven dwells with them. "For thus saith the high and lofty one, that inhabiteth eternity whose name is holy. I dwell in the high

and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." Isa. 58, 15.

Seek my readers, this poverty of spirit. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God thou wilt not despise." Ps. 51, 17.

Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly than to divide the spoil with the proud. Prov. 16, 19.

FAREWELL WORDS OF A TRAVELLER.

(From the French.)

There is always something painful in the separation of two friends. When one has for some time enjoyed the society of a person for whom he has an esteem and an attachment which he shares, he cannot bid him a last farewell without painful feelings, especially if he has no hope of seeing him again. Thus, when Paul bade farewell to his friends from Ephesus, they were deeply distressed at it, "but most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more."

We have spent but a short time together; before we were strangers to one another, and we are about to become so again; each of us is about to continue his journey, and it is very likely that you will never see me again. But, though our acquaintance has been so short, I desire to leave you a token of remembrance at separating from you, perhaps for ever. Each of us belongs to the great family of mankind; we each possess a treasure of great price, an immortal soul, and we are both travelling to the same destination, the life to come. My friend! for it is as such that I regard you, permit me to bid you a tender farewell, and to remind you that if we do not see one another again on earth, we must however find one another again in another world; we shall find one another when our souls

shall have left this clay covering, when there shall be no more either day or night; when spring shall have ceased to show itself after winter, and summer to follow spring; when the sun shall have ceased to shine, and the stars to twinkle; when months, years, ages—yea, time itself shall be no more; when the voice of the archangel and the trump of God shall have summoned the dead to appear, and proclaimed the arrival of the day of judgment. And then, where shall we see one another again?

Shall it be in a world of misery? Shall we lift up our eyes in the midst of torments, to discover ourselves in that horrible place from which we can never be delivered? What a meeting that would be! what could we say to each other, and with what looks would we contemplate our misery, regretting that we had ever met before!!

But if we find one another again in heaven! O delightful thought! we shall hail one another with a smile more cheerful than the brightness of a beautiful morning. Let us examine, then, if we are prepared for that holy place; for none enters its sacred gates, except he has been "prepared unto glory." O! my soul, how art thou disposed? My friend! how is it with you? "*Except a man be born again,*" He who shall fix our portion for ever says, "*he cannot see the kingdom of God.*" Have you been born again? Unless our sins are pardoned, we cannot see the face of God with joy; are your sins pardoned? Without the robe of righteousness we cannot have a place at the marriage supper of the Lamb; are we justified and sanctified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit of our God? Delightful hope! glorious prospect! If we are new creatures in Christ Jesus, if He is all our hope, if we bear His image in us, we shall meet again happy, triumphant, glorified. But, in either case, we shall both be summoned before the judgment-seat of

Christ; for we must all appear there to give account to God *that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* There, every work shall be brought into judgment, and all secrets shall be made known. Jesus shall be seated on His throne, surrounded by the living and the dead; the great and the small shall be before Him; He shall separate the good from the wicked, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; He shall say to the good, who shall be at His right hand—“Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” But, He shall say to the wicked, who shall be at His left hand—“Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.” Perhaps we shall not see one another; but, however, we shall both be there; shall it be at the right or at the left? both on the same side, or on opposite sides? Must one be saved, the other lost, whilst the one shall ascend to heaven, must the other be cast down into the pit of hell, so that we shall never see each other again—never?

You immediately answer that you desire to shun that calamity, but that you know not how to do so. What was the answer of Jesus to a like question? “I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” Would you then know how you can be delivered from hell? Christ himself says to you in reply—“*I am the way.*” And if you would know how you can enter into heaven, He still gives you the same answer—“*I am the way,*—the way which will conduct you far from the shadow of death,—the way by which you shall enter into life.” *God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* Behold the salvation which is offered to you, for that Christ has died and risen again. “Consider what I say, and

the Lord give you understanding in all things.” Do not forget these counsels; they are given you by one who earnestly desires your eternal happiness; regard them as the last words of a friend. If you have already thought of these things; if, by divine grace, you enjoy a blessed hope, look if you cannot find means to advance the glory of God and His kingdom in the souls of your brethren. Did you ever hear of any one having repented, on his deathbed, of having served the Lord with too much zeal? The more we are impressed with the thought of eternity, and the more clearly we see the opportunities of usefulness which are put within our reach, in proportion as the passing away of our days brings us near the dread tribunal, we hear the more distinctly that awful sentence, *Cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* “When I die,” said a zealous and unwearied Christian, “I shall feel the greatest sorrow and the greatest joy—the greatest sorrow because I have done so little for Christ—the greatest joy because Christ has done so much for me.” But if, unhappily, you have lived till the present in indifference, and in forgetfulness of these things, O! think how short the time is; your days come and go; you cannot recall one hour, one moment. The sun once stood still at the command of Joshua, but time did not stand still. The sun went back ten degrees on the dial of Ahaz, but time continued its course with the same rapidity. It rushes onward, and carries you towards eternity. You risk everything, you may be lost for ever. Wherefore, by the awful authority of God—by the terrors of death and of the last judgment—by the joys of heaven and the torments of hell—by the value of your immortal soul, I pray you, I entreat you, to rouse yourself from your security, and improve the favourable moments of life. The world is passing away, and everything is disappearing around you, can you then remain easy in this world, without being prepared for eternity? Rouse your soul, now, at the voice of a friend, before the last trumpet give you a call of another kind. *Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost. Farewell.*

METIS, C.E.

T. F.

AN ABSTRACT OF THE BIOGRAPHY OF SAMSON.

BY REV. THOMAS SHARP, ASHBURN, C.W.

(Continued from our Last.)

2. AS A FALLEN HUSBAND.—The marriage feast was celebrated according to the rude and revelling customs of the uncircumcised in the land, polluting and profaning that holy ordinance of marriage by pouring forth libations and sacrifices to Dagon their god, as they did afterwards when they came to triumph over the ruin of this mighty champion of Israel. The promise or pledge of marriage which he made to the woman, if she inclined to hold him to it, he durst not have recalled on the ground that his capricious fancy had changed, or that he had lost conceit of her. Had Samson changed and pled to be off on that ground, he would be pitied as an imbecile, or scorned and hated as a selfish and heartless villain. But if there was no such fluctuation of his fancy, but reason and conscience rising up and rebuking him for ever having so yielded to his fancy as to have deliberately preferred the creature to the Creator, and to have purposed to separate himself from God and his people for that creature's sake, by marrying her in the open face of the written law of the Lord, and before he actually married, stung with religious remorse, say, How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God? A retreat thus made from devout and conscientious convictions, must have humbled and afflicted him even till he died. And yet it would have been his clearly incumbent duty that very instant to have resiled. But having actually married, would it have been his duty to have sued for a divorce if he had even then come to have been convinced of his sin? There was no remorse after the marriage, whatever he may have felt before it; for on the occasion of his wife being taken from him and given to another

man—which was virtually a divorce—instead of his grasping at this as a very God-send, as a fair opening for his return to be right with God, he was the more incensed and maddened. This trait of Samson's character is all the more deserving of notice; for as in the case of every one whose heart departeth from the Lord, there is a certain mark standing on the side of the broad road, which, if the sinner pass swiftly in the dark, as he is exceedingly apt to do, the difficulties in the way of his ever thinking to return increase so fast, that at that particular point he may be said to have entered spiritually into the dark valley and shadow of death, so that it is only by suffering as he did, perhaps many times more than all the bitterness of death, that you can ever come out of it. Beware, then, of all manner of evil, and of inordinate desires, from which you are exhorted to flee. In tampering with sin, especially where there has ever previously existed anything like a heartfelt acquaintance and intimacy with the spirit of holiness, you so grieve that Spirit by your wilfulness, distaste or positive dread and hatred of his counsel, that he withdraws from you as the God of all grace, leaving you like Samson in an unguarded hour to some step of your own choosing, embittering your whole future life, and casting you aside at last a melancholy wreck and monument, as this lapsed believer was, and will be even for ever, if the rigour with which the Lord, most merciful as he is and gracious, must needs very often resent his creature's slighting of him and turning with determined obstinacy from his ways. How soon do you see the godless mirth of that marriage turned into heaviness if not to melancholy, and threatening to mire him for ever in domestic wrangling and broils. Why did he conceal the solution of his riddle from his wife? His reason was his not having previously told his parents. Is the duty of a son to interfere with that of the husband? Surely not. Between hus-

band and wife there should be no secrets reserved; for none living should come between them for a preferable claim for anything. They twain are one flesh. A man shall leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife. It was therefore his clear duty to have first put his trust in his wife; but then have you no pity for the man who, in an evil hour, has committed himself to a marriage of that kind, which made that and almost every other moral duty a sort of downright moral impossibility. Had he married in the Lord, as the son of such a father, and still more of such a mother so intellectual and so devout might have been expected to do, how would he have trusted, and loved, and all but worshipped the woman with whom he was so united. Samson appears to have been a man of the intensest fondness, and ready to fight to the death for the just rights of everybody, because of his own innate and invincible adherence to truth and equity. But how could he trust such a woman as that? Her tears and incessant opportunities prevailed with him, and he disclosed to her the riddle. This he did, not because he loved her or trusted her, or saw and felt it to be his duty. For no other conceivable reason than because, like the importunate widow with the unjust judge in the parable, for seven days she lay sore upon him, teasing and tormenting him night and day, until at last she worked it out and wrung it from him. Such is a specimen of the evils of those marriages made on the strength of vain fancies or grosser passions which never last, in the making of which God and his glory are not in the least regarded; and his counsel, so far from being sought and waited for, is an object of suspicious dislike and hatred. Can you then suppose that God, after sending his Son for no other purpose than to interest you intensely about himself as one who is more to you than a father, and all your earthly kindred besides—can you think that he can take it well to

find himself, by professing Christians, so often as he is, in such matters, overlooked and left out altogether? Do not think to escape with such conduct, more especially if, at any former period, you have had any intelligent and confidential intercourse with God. God is loath to part with any of you to the devil; and it is impossible that he should ever consent to quit you unless you should yourselves provoke him to it; for he declares of all those of you who have ever truly known his name, and really believed in him, that he will visit your transgressions with the rod and your iniquities with stripes—that you shall be judged in the world now, that you may not be judged or condemned along with the world hereafter, and that the misery, distress, and peradventure the very death of this backslidden believer, who could not otherwise have been reclaimed, is but a picture and a prophecy of what must be fulfilled in you, if, after having tasted of the good gift of God and the power of the world to come, you turn thus wilfully away from him to fulfil any one of all the deceitful lusts, whether of the flesh or of the mind. The main ingredient of Samson's character had now quite ceased to be piety, but it still continued to be patriotism, and a sense of outraged and unvindicated justice that ever provoked him to retaliate, proportioning the outlet of it to the exact amount of injury done him; and even in his dying moments it gleams forth like the last, and therefore the very brightest, flash of an instantly expiring flame. "Strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God." The murder of Samson's wife by the Philistines was the occasion of a revival to his soul. On the rock Etam you find the son of such a mother thinking on his ways. Grace is not hereditary, yet all observation proves that mere intellectual and moral gifts very often are, and seem oftenest to come by the mother's side. How surpassing wonderful must each of these steps of Providence have appeared to him;

such as his having rushed most wilfully into that marriage, thereafter having striven to make the best of it, and in spite of himself being involved in such wretched wranglings and broils as forced on a separation; and though by the interference of another meddler he had been as good as divorced, he had striven to be again enthralled, till now that He who maketh the wrath of man to praise him, did, by the wicked hands of these cruel Philistines themselves, force him to be as free as before his marriage. Even without, inheriting his mother's wondrous talent to reason and reflection, yet he who once had believing and intelligent intercourse with God must have been struck with the awful interposition of God, whose holiness he had disliked, whose counsel he had dreaded, and was willing to forget that he will be sanctified of all them that draw near unto him. Burying himself in solitude, he meditates and prays, and this amid the remembrance of the sins of that godless marriage, by which another far more helpless and less criminal than himself was involved, to see if he can discover any pathway for his return to God, resume his lost position with him, and be as it were a child again. Had he been suffered to remain in such serious meditation for any length of time, the penitent would doubtless have shown himself far holier and wiser, and fitter in every way to judge and rule for the Lord in Israel. But as this present evil world, with its cares, business, and amusements, returns and intrudes upon many of you, and dissipates all your reviving piety and penitence into nothing, so did it fare with this sore-stricken Israelite, who had almost turned once more to the Lord; but prosperity returning, and peace along with it, the way was prepared for those relapses and pollution which precipitated him into that horrid prison, or rather furnace, from out of which he was saved, yet so as by fire.

3. SAMSON AS A FALLEN JUDGE.—A

very considerable period of time had elapsed between the revival of his soul at Lehi and the grossly sinful acts which stained his latter end: for it is about the close of those twenty long years of his judgeship, and whilst he was yet in the noonday prime and blooming vigour of his days, being about the fortieth year of his age, that he so miserably fell again. During a long period, his spiritual character had been going on deteriorating, and secretly wasting away. He began to relax his efforts, and grow remiss in the discharge of the duties of his peculiar vocation; for you never read a word more of his gallant enterprizes and exploits as the destroyer of the Philistines for the deliverance of Israel, and vainly supposing that he had accomplished all that he had to do, having well earned his nation's gratitude, he should settle down, and be at rest, enjoying his rich and well-earned honours as a judge, and letting the Philistines and their modified tyranny and extortion alone. It was Samson's besetting sin that recurred and ruined him at last, though not immediately. Any one of the lusts of the flesh has the faculty of retreating and hiding itself, and lying in ambush, and watching there its opportunity; so that when, like Samson at Etam and Lehi, you seem to have given it a mortal stab, and driven off it retires and for a time it is still, but as a repulsed and retreating tiger who, although disabled by a gunshot wound, will as certainly return by and bye in the dark, knowing where to find you by tracking the scent of the blood which had trickled from his side. Thus your besetting sin retires, leaving a tracing of itself, so that it will most certainly return, it may be after half a life-time; and you must therefore live armed, and entrenched, and vigilant, that it may never dare to come nigh you. As the God of all grace, the Lord had in a great measure departed from Samson, but he still continued to countenance him by dispensing to him one of those marvellous

gifts which are so perfectly distinct and different from graces, that you see a similar separation every day in the case of those professed disciples of Christ, who, though fallen from grace through the lusts of the flesh, yet retain unimpaired all those gifts of reasoning, convincing and converting other men. But after the profanation of the vow by which, from his birth, he had been consecrated to the Lord, in pity for his recovery and in wrath for his chastisement, he stripped him also of his gifts. This took him by surprise and stunned him, and the first intimation he got that the Lord had departed from him for a time as to gifts and graces, was his finding that he staggered as he rose, and fell helpless into the hands of those savage operators, who proceeded to put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, where they bound him in fetters of brass, and made him grind in the prison-house. There is between the Nazaritish vow and Christian baptism a close resemblance. Both extended over the whole term of life, and the preserving of the hair was like our baptism with water, in its being a sign and seal of making a covenant with the Lord, blessed to fulfil and as dangerous to break. But for Samson to intimate to the Lord that, though pledged to him for life, he had grown tired of him and of his service, and was resolved to quit both and take his own wilful way in all time coming, wherever it might lead him. From this he naturally shrunk. He would not do it himself, nor let others do it for him. And so does many a one cling to his baptism and the other ordinances of the sanctuary. Long after the religious principle and piety of youth have fled, like this Israelite, they would have grave fears of entering on anything that would seem to say that they had actually renounced God and Jesus Christ altogether, and were prepared to abide the consequences. But in process of time from even this they will fall away, their fears and forebodings of evil being lulled to sleep by the encroachment of sin, until God seize them and cast them into a fiery furnace, and they be forced, in the bitterness of their soul, to own that the Lord has departed from them. How long Samson was of recovering strength, we can only conjecture, from its being indicated by the progressive growth of his hair. Never until

then had he gotten back his strength; but with the completion of that slow process he became himself again; not merely in gifts, but still more richly adorned with graces also. His hair was what baptism is to you, a sign and seal of your personal covenant with God. And the growth of the hair signified the growth of Samson's returning confidence in that covenant and the renewal of it, as the forgetting of it was the immediate cause of his ruin. He had meditations about God and himself as he lay nightly on the earthen floor of that gloomy cell. In former days he had reasoned about God as though his single attribute was mercy, so now that he is fast sinking into melancholy, threatening to end in madness, he is sure to reason about God as though in his mind there existed nothing but stern justice alone. After a while this despairing saint did, in his blindness, grope about till feeling at length for the covenant, he laid his still timid and trembling hand upon it. And immediately as he did that, his courage slowly rallied, returned, and grew, as indicated by the growth of his hair, and by and bye he felt that he was growing stronger than ever. And when God in his providence brought on the day that all those uncircumcised, doomed and devil-like idolators were assembled into one place, setting him conspicuously between the two great central pillars of it, to make him cruelly their sport: yet he who was now again in sympathy with the mighty One who overrules the creation, through his recovered hold on the covenant, which in an evil hour he had let go, now lifted up his heart in prayer again unto heaven. And whilst he was yet speaking, He that dwelleth in the heavens hearkened and heard and gave him all his desire; so that the first morning of his days was bright as the sun and beautiful, his last moments were sublime as is sometimes the setting of that great luminary, when amazed, you call to each other to look out, and see how he puts forth even more than all his strength again, and amid what's irpassing glories he is retiring from the world. All going to convince you of this blessed truth, that however it may be in other places of creation, yet here, where all have sinned, God sets more value upon the solitary sincere repentance of every single one of you, than even upon all the righteousness of all the

righteous that never fell; and that judgment is indeed his strange work; and that there is none like unto Him that so delighteth in mercy. Thus prayed, and thus died, one of the greatest champions of earth, and worthy therefore, was he to be borne away from the ruins, carried by many brethren and by the house of his father and laid in the place of his father's sepulchres, as a prince and a great man, who had fought and had fallen gloriously that day for Israel's liberties and for the honour of Israel's God. It is but a little while, and you shall see him raised along with yourselves in the day of the Lord, and standing probably among the foremost of those most blessed saints of whom it is written that they loved not their lives unto the death; and they laid them down for their brethren; and they overcame by the word of their testimony, and by the blood of the Lamb. Amen.

WHAT IS INVOLVED IN A JEW CONFESSING CHRIST ?

Concluded.

"I had now a duty to perform, nor could I rest till it was performed; which was, to go and see my parents. We had not met for some time; and although I knew it would be a most painful interview, yet to have omitted a visit to them at this particular time, would have amounted to a virtual admission that I acknowledged myself in error.

"Thou, O Lord, are a shield for me, my glory and the lifter up of mine head.' Never shall I forget the morning I went to my parents; it was the last time I saw them, and in all human probability we shall not meet again in this world. A servant admitted me, and I fancied I could read in her countenance that I was considered an intruder. I felt much agitated as I entered the room where my parents were sitting at breakfast. As I approached them, they averted their faces from me. I bade them good morning, and inquired after their health; a pause ensued, and for two or three minutes I received no reply. My father then raised his head from his hand, on which he had been leaning, and turning to me with a look of contempt and indignation, addressed me nearly as follows:

'How dare you have the temerity, sir, to enter the house of parents you have so grossly offended?' I said, 'In what have I so much grieved you?' He replied, 'By the abominable act you have committed; for ever separating yourself from your family and nation.'

"I attempted to speak about the Messiah, but he would not allow me to proceed. 'You have brought shame and reproach upon your father's house.' I asked if we were not under the curse pronounced upon all who did not keep *all* the Commandments, and endeavored to show the difference of being under Grace and under the Law. My father said, 'I will not enter into any discussion with you: you were at liberty to maintain your own opinions, if you objected to the forms and services of religion; but you had no occasion to make it publicly manifest that you disapproved of them. In your own house you could do as you pleased, but in public you might have kept silence concerning anything you deemed objectionable in your institutions.' I replied that in doing so I should have been a decided hypocrite. My father said, 'You have connected yourself with hypocrites, and deceivers, and worshippers of devils, in preference to the worshippers of the true and only God.' I was about to explain who and what we worshipped, and how completely the Jews were in error in not worshipping the *Triune* God of the Christian, whose existence was as manifest in the Old Testament Scriptures as in the New; but he would not suffer me to reply.

"Go," he said, "and never dare to enter this house again, unless you repent of this wicked deed, and forever renounce the society of idolaters. If you had committed any crime, however heinous, short of apostasy, I could have forgiven you; but now I shall try to forget you. You are breaking the hearts of your parents, but you will not go unpunished; for a time you will be a slave to these Christians, and do just as they please; they will then despise you, and cast you off, leaving you to the remorse of your own conscience, and to the scorn and derision of Jews and Gentiles. I said, 'I did not expect that such would ever be the case.' He thereupon mentioned several cases which had come under his own observation, to bear him out in what he asserted. I said 'I did not fear what man

ould do to me, for God had promised He would not forsake those who put their trust in Him.'

"He replied, 'The promises are not to you, for you have forsaken God.' My poor dear mother, with uplifted hands, and with her aged cheeks bedewed with tears, besought me to seek a reconciliation with God by taking penance, that is to say, to go to the chief Rabbi or High Priest, and express my contrition for the abominable sin I had committed in embracing Christianity; and state how desirous I was of returning to Judaism. He would then appoint certain acts of penance for me to perform, and after the expiration of a few days, I should receive absolution, and be restored to the privileges of the Jewish religion, to the joy of the people, more especially of my kindred, who considered a triumph would be thus obtained over the Gentiles.

"This appeal from my dear mother afflicted me greatly,—O could I have been spared this!—this was indeed as a thorn in the flesh—but I felt assured that I was under the guidance of the Lord, and He was my strength and my stay. I therefore addressed my dear parents, and told them, how exceedingly pained I felt at being unintentionally the cause of so much grief and distress of mind to them, in consequence of their erroneous views of the late occurrence. I assured them that so far from my filial love and duty being diminished, it was continually increasing, for that I now felt greater interest than before in their spiritual welfare. I appealed to my former conduct whether I had ever offended them in word or deed. However, said I, 'you may condemn me, and cast me off, my constant petitions shall be offered up for your welfare; and be assured that, through the grace given unto me by the keeper of Israel, I will never do anything that shall bring shame or discredit upon myself, my relations, or my nation.' 'That is false,' said my father, 'for you have done that already, by openly renouncing your God, and the God, of your fathers; and now, he continued, I wish for no more arguments with you: you had better leave this house,' I replied, 'As my presence appears to cause you so much uneasiness, I obey, and may the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, by his Holy spirit comfort you and guide you unto all truth.'

"And now by this dispensation of Pro-

vidence my Saviour became more precious to me, for no one can sympathize with his people like Jesus. My father and mother had forsaken me, but the Lord hath taken me up. What astonishing mercy! O may I ever be willing to suffer the loss of all things, so that I may win Christ!

"I knew there was nothing now before me but affliction, poverty, distress and persecution, but I likewise knew that God was able to supply all my need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. We were considered as *dead* by both our families; and on such occasions the parents brothers and sisters of the deceased are compelled, according to the Rabbinical law, to sit for seven days on very low seats, to rend their garments, and to mourn for the departed soul. During that space of time they must not leave their houses, nor transact any business, and I believe their misguided zeal would (if they had possessed the power) have actually realized what was done in semblance, *i. e.* they would have buried me."

A KAREN GIVER.

A Karen woman, who had heard of Jesus, and loved him with all her heart, lay upon the bed of death. The house was a miserable place, a mere hut, and everything in it showed that the dying woman was very poor. But she was rich in faith and in good works.

One day the missionary called, and after spending some time with her in conversation and prayer, rose up to go away, when the good creature begged him to stop a little longer. She then crept along to another part of the hut, and coming back to the missionary, put a rupee (about two shillings), into his hand. At first he did not know what she meant, and said to her, "What is to be done with this?" "This is very little," she said, "but it is all I have, and it is to help the cause of Christ."—"For days," adds the missionary, "I could not cease reflecting on the expression, 'This is to help the cause of Christ.' When I thought of the withered hand and wrinkled face of her who gave it, that rupee was magnified a thousand times beyond its real value."

Sabbath School Lessons.

May 11th, 1862.

JACOB IN EGYPT,—GEN. XLV. 1-31.

I. *Joseph intimates to Pharaoh the arrival of his father and brethren.*

He did so through respect for his sovereign, and to announce to him that his commands had been obeyed. Pharaoh had commanded that Joseph's family should settle in the best of the Land of Egypt, chap. xlv. 19. One would suppose that a bare invitation would have been sufficient when what was required of them was so much for their own interest, and yet there are many so infatuated as to neglect an invitation unspcakably more precious, a command infinitely more merciful.

II. *Joseph presents five of his brethren to Pharaoh.*

This presentation to the king would tend to raise them in the estimation of the Egyptians. Observe, Pharaoh enquires, concerning their occupation, v. 3. All should have some employment, either of head or of hand, and it is the duty of magistrates to see that all are occupied in some useful calling, and that there are no useless drones in the social community. If any of them excelled in their business, Pharaoh wished that they should be made his chief herdsmen—rulers over his cattle. In whatever trade or profession we may be engaged, we should endeavour to become proficient; and it is only right that they who have attained the greatest excellence in their pursuits should obtain preferment.

III. *The respect shown by Joseph to his father.*

He next introduced the aged patriarch to Pharaoh, "and Jacob blessed Pharaoh," v. 7. He who was called Israel, who like a prince, had power both with God and man to prevail, prayed to God for him. Pharaoh had shown kindness to Jacob, he had bestowed upon him the best that he had, and now Jacob rewards him with the only recompence that he had in his power to give, he recommends him to the goodness of Him who is the King of kings; and who knows but that Egyptian monarch may be now enjoying, and shall enjoy through all eternity the benefit of the patriarch's blessing: the prayers of God's people are not to be despised. Pharaoh asked Jacob's age, v. 8. The king was struck with his venerable aspect, as Jacob had probably attained to a much greater age than was common amongst the Egyptians.—Jacob's answer is observable. He measures his life by days; for every moment of time we shall have to give an account unto God. He compares his life to a pilgrimage; he confessed that he was a stranger and a pilgrim here, that he sought a better country, that is an heavenly, Heb. xi. 13, 14. He describes

the days of his life as having been few. It is remarkable that even to them who have attained the greatest age, their life appears quite short when they look back upon it; an hundred and thirty years did so to Jacob.—How short then must the period of our lives appear to Him, to whom a thousand years are but as one day. He confesses that they had been evil; not one of them had been passed in a manner in strict conformity with the will of God. Evil was the character of them all. And have we not all to make the same confession? If we think that we have not, we deceive ourselves, and are in a most dangerous condition. But if we have seen the evil of our lives, and have been enabled through grace to lay our sins on the spotless Lamb of God, then are we blessed indeed.—By the grace of our blessed Redeemer, we shall be dying more and more, every day, unto sin, and living unto righteousness.—And though like the patriarch Jacob we ought with sorrow to look back upon the evil of our past lives, yet like him we may be filled, also, with joy and praise at the retrospect, when we consider all that our God has done for us, at the same time that we may look forward with joyful anticipation to the bright future beyond the grave.

IV. *The Egyptians apply to Joseph for bread.*

In their extremity, they parted first with their cattle, and then with their lands and liberty—"Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life." Observe the wisdom with which Joseph acted in this matter, he sought the interest of his master at the same time that he withheld not the means of subsistence from the people. He took care, too, not to make too hard terms with them regarding their land. When he might have taken all, he was satisfied with a fifth, thus Pharaoh's subjects would ever afterwards be well affected towards the government, from the fact that they had been treated with so much consideration in the time of their necessity.

V. *The prosperity of the Israelites in Egypt.*

Whilst the Egyptians were reduced to so great difficulty to obtain food in their own land, Jacob and his family, though strangers, were in the enjoyment of abundance. Who ever wants, God's people shall not want, Psal. xxxiv. 10. For seventeen years Jacob lived in Egypt, v. 28. Joseph was seventeen years of age when he was sold into Egypt, it is remarkable, therefore, that he nourished his father for just the same length of time that his father had nourished him. Israel makes Joseph promise to bury him in Canaan, and confirm his promise with an oath. He did so for his own satisfaction, and that Joseph might be able to plead his oath in answer to any objections that might afterwards be urged to the removal of the body. Jacob wished so earnestly to be

buried in Canaan, chiefly because it was typical of that better country which he desired.

Learn, 1. That God is merciful to all.—*Matt. v. 45.*

2. That he watches with peculiar care over his church,—*Psal. cxxv. 4; 1 Tim. iv. 10.*

May 18th 1862.

FEAR GOD,—*LUKE XII. 1-12.*

I. Christ's warning against hypocrisy.

An innumerable multitude, in the original, myriads, of people had gathered together for the purpose of hearing him who spake as never man spake, from which circumstance we learn that though his reproofs were re-sented by the Pharisees, yet his preaching was highly acceptable to the common people. Before this immense multitude he warns his disciples against the sin of hypocrisy. This warning though applicable to all his hearers was aimed more especially at his own disciples, the twelve apostles or it may be the seventy whom he sent out to preach the gospel. The very best of men have need to watch against this insidious sin so natural to the human heart. Our Lord compares it to leaven; for like leaven it works silently and secretly and soon affects the whole mass.—The reason Christ assigned for this admonition was that "there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed," *v. 2.* From Him neither privacy nor darkness can conceal anything, and soon every one must appear before Him in his true character.

II. Whom Christ's disciples should fear.

They were not to be influenced by the fear of man, who could do them no greater injury than killing the body, and could not even do that without permission. But they were to fear him who had power either to kill or to preserve the body, and to cast both body and soul into hell. They who fear God fear nothing else, but they who fear him not, are greatly influenced by the fear of man, whatever they may profess. "It is true," said the martyred Bishop Hooper, when urged by the Papists to recant at the stake, "It is true life is sweet and death bitter; but eternal life is more sweet, and eternal death more bitter."

III. Christ's encouragement to his persecuted disciples.

In all times of trouble we have need to strengthen ourselves by a consideration of the first principles of our blessed religion.—Firm belief in the universality and extent of God's providence has sustained and comforted thousands. Not one of the most insignificant of creatures is forgotten before God. He feeds and preserves the sparrow and takes notice of its death. How much more then shall he be concerned in all the interests

of his servants for whom he gave up his Son to die. He is infinitely better acquainted with all our concerns than we can be ourselves. "The very hairs of your head are all numbered," *v. 7.* With all confidence therefore, in all the circumstances of this changeful life may we rely upon him. Properly speaking there is no such thing as "chance," "fortune" or "misfortune," but the hand of a heavenly Father is in every event of the Christian's life, and our language ought always to be "It pleaseth the Lord, therefore it shall please me."

IV. We must confess Christ if we wish that he would acknowledge us as his saved ones on the judgment-day.

This confession must be constant and persevering. It will not do to confess him one day and deny him the next. We must confess him before men, whatever opposition the confession may involve. Through good report and bad report in the face of every persecution and of death itself we must own him for our Lord or he will deny us before his holy angels. We must confess him not only in word, but also in deed.

V. That there is such a thing as an unpardonable sin.

As to the nature of the sin against the Holy Ghost, the soundest divines believe it to be a combination of great speculative knowledge of gospel doctrines and an unsanctified heart. They also unanimously believe that this sin cannot consist with the fear of having committed it. For insensibility, total depravity, and impenitency, are the prominent characteristics of those who have sinned against the Holy Ghost.

VI. That Christ's disciples should not be over anxious as to what they shall say when required to give an account of their religion.

From this passage some have most unwarrantably inferred that ministers should make no preparation for their pulpit-duties. But the word of God is too solemn a thing to be trifled with. It is quite evident that the passage has no reference to the duty of ministers with regard to the preaching of the word; but it is an assurance to believers that when they are brought before human tribunals whether civil or ecclesiastical they would by Christ's Holy Spirit be taught a wise and consistent answer to the accusations of their adversaries. Witness the fulfilment of this promise in Paul's defence of himself before the Jews at Jerusalem, on the steps of the castle, and before Felix, Festus and Agrippa; also the answers of the Reformers and Martyrs at their public trials.

Learn 1. That we should ever act as under the eye of God,—*Gen. xvii. 1; Chron. xvi. 9; Heb. xi. 27.*

2. That we should fear God and not man.—*Psa. lvi. 4; Isa. viii. 12, 13.*

3. That we should prayerfully endeavour

to confess Christ every day of our lives, in our words, and in our walk and conversation, —Matt. x. 32; Rom. x. 9; 1 Tim. vi. 13.

May 25th, 1862.

JACOB BLESSING HIS GRANDSONS.
GEN. XLVIII. 1-22.

1. *Joseph, upon receiving intelligence of his father's sickness, goes to see him.*

Though a man of business, he would not fail in paying this duty to his dying parent. He took with him his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh; it is good that the young should see the servants of God when laid on the bed of sickness or of death, as they may then have ocular demonstration of the reality and power of true religion. Joseph had been Jacob's favourite son; he had also shown him more kindness than any of his other sons. When Jacob therefore heard that he was coming to see him, he prepared to meet him—"Israel strengthened himself, and sat upon the bed." We are enjoined to stir up the gift that is within us.

2. *Jacob's adoption of Ephraim and Manasseh.*

He recapitulates the promises which God had made him. We should seek to comfort both ourselves and others by calling the promises to remembrance. "And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, shall be mine," not only my grandsons but my sons, "as Reuben and Simeon they shall be mine;" v. 5. As his sons, he constituted them also heads of tribes; but as for any sons which Joseph might afterwards have, they were not included in this charter of adoption; they were to be assumed into the tribes of their brethren. We do not learn that Joseph ever had any more sons; however, Jacob wisely provides for such a contingency.

3. *Joseph presents his sons for his father's blessing.*

"The eyes of Israel were dim for age, so that he could not see;" ver. 10. Though old age is an honour, it is attended with many infirmities; but the bodily vision may be dim, and our faith be strong. Jacob testified great affection towards his grandsons, "he kissed them and embraced them;" ver. 10. For years he had been under the impression that Joseph was dead. But he not only had enjoyed the happiness of seeing "the lost one" alive and prosperous, but also of seeing his offspring; ver. 11. Thus, even in temporal matters, God blesses his people "exceeding abundantly, above all that they can ask or think." In the blessings which they enjoyed, both Jacob and Joseph discerned the hand of God;" v. 9-11. There was not the custom, so prevalent at the present time, of attributing every event, prosperous or adverse, to second causes; they traced every blessing up to the hand of a gracious

God. Joseph so placed his sons before his father, that in pronouncing the blessing Jacob's right hand should be on the head of the eldest and his left hand on that of the youngest. But, by crossing his hands, Jacob reversed this arrangement, not from fancy or partiality, but wittingly, under the influence of the prophetic spirit, as he explained to Joseph; v. 19.

4. *The blessing pronounced by Jacob upon his grandsons.*

"God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk." He holds up to these young men, who were now about twenty-one years of age, their forefathers, Abraham and Isaac, as models to imitate. If they would covet the same blessing as these good men, they would have to walk in the same steps as they also walked. "The Angel which redeemed me from all evil," ver. 16, who delivered me from every danger, who preserved me in the midst of temptation, and who will shortly set me free from all sin and sorrow, bless the lads. There can be no doubt that the Angel here mentioned was the Lord Jesus, the Angel of the Covenant, the Redeemer. The superiority of the tribe of Ephraim to that of Manasseh appeared from the fact that the former was more numerous than the latter when the tribes were mustered in the wilderness; Joshua also was of the tribe of Ephraim. Manasseh, too, was divided, lying partly on one side of the Jordan, and partly on the other.

5. *The peculiar marks of distinction which Jacob conferred upon Joseph.*

First.—To him he committed the promise that God would bring them again into the land of their fathers. When, therefore, the Egyptians showed them kindness, they were not to set their affections too much upon Egypt, and if they were oppressed, they were not to be cast down. "Behold I die; but God shall be with you;" ver. 21. Our friends may be separated from us by death or other causes, but God will never leave us.

Secondly.—He conferred upon Joseph a double portion. The land here bequeathed is described as that which he had taken from the Amorite with his sword and bow. It appears that Jacob first purchased it from that people; Jos. xxiv. 32. He must have afterwards been dispossessed of it by the Amorites, and have again recovered it from them by force of arms. This portion of land is alluded to, Jno. iv. 5.

Learn—1. That we should visit the sick and afflicted.—Ecd. vii. 2; Matt. xxv. 36.

2nd. That the blessing of God is to be desired above all other things.—Prov. x. 22.

3rd. That we should set our affections on the things of the heavenly Canaan, the land of promise, not on the things of this world, where we are only sojourners.—Col. iii. 2; 1 John ii. 15.