


THE CANADA CHRISTIAN MONTHLY.

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Editorial.

THE CHRISTIAN PRESS.

“HE Sword and The Trowel,” Spurgeon’s outspoken Monthly Magazine, contains in its September issue some very severe criticism on the religious press of our day. In an article there “by a city man” the question is asked, “What shall we say of the Christian press?” Here is the answer. “Religious puffs, exaggerated reports of meetings, one-sided biographical sketches, sickly sentimental novels, columns thrown open for the discussion of every species of unbelief, all with the ostensible object of making the paper popular, and thus increasing its sale—is this Christianity? Let the idea of a Christian press be abandoned, or let the spirit of Christ be breathed in every line from the leading article down to the shortest advertisement.”

And again in the same number, in an editorial on the Protestant press, the editor says,—“The workings of a corrupt press awaken our ire, but ‘religious’ journals which trade in sensational theology and trashy tales are still (more?) mischievous as their tendency is to enervate the Christian life. Mushroom papers spring up on all sides, and men without ability, either to spell or write passable English, think themselves competent to fill an editor’s chair, and cramming their papers with the sensationalism of the Old and the New World, they give what costs little and is dear at its price Sermons by New York highfliers, and ‘powerful’ stories form the staple of their trade. . . . If the truth were told in the titles;

if they appeared as the 'Religious Sensationalist' and the 'Christian Bow Bells' thoughtless people would hesitate before admitting them to their homes."

With some allowance for a spice of exaggeration that not unfrequently marks the language of "The Sword and The Trowel," it must be admitted that there is in the above criticism a considerable amount of sad truth. The fact is this, that Christians have now-a-days to stand on their guard against not only what the late Mr. Charles Knight called the "garbage field" of literature, but against literature which is godless, and literature also, strange to say, which is *professedly Christian*.

The sewer literature, "into which all the garbage," as Mr. Knight remarks, "that belongs to the history of crime and misery, is raked together to diffuse a moral miasma throughout the land, in the shape of the most vulgar and brutal fiction," this literature smells so rank to heaven that the doors and windows of Christian households, are, as a general thing, closed against its admittance, though not as generally and carefully as they should be, in view of its horrible character. But the Christian must be on his guard also, against a literature which is godless in the sense of ignoring God, and his providential care over beings made in his own image, in the sense of overlooking Christ, his incarnation, his atonement, his resurrection, his kingdom and glory. Speaking of this style of literature, Dr. Noah Porter, President of Yale College, Conn., U.S.A., says:—"One can scarcely believe what he knows, when he reflects on the rapid growth, and strong-rooted hold of this Atheistic school of letters on English soil, and its temporary triumph in what is claimed to be the most Christian of its universities. That it exists, and presents a most formidable front to the hereditary faith of the English people cannot be denied. The cool propositions to the Christian Church to subject its faith in prayer, to the verifications of experiment, and to resort to suicide, and scientific homicide as humane expedients to limit human suffering, illustrate the length of practical atheism to which this literature may be insensibly led."

It seems, however, that there is another species of literature which calls itself Christian, but, which, like the pirates of old, hangs out the Christian flag as a cover and a blind to other selfish intentions. This species of literature is often very respectful towards Christianity in general terms; it speaks in a kind approving way of Christ, but in its novels, tales and stories, which fill about two-thirds of its total space, we find hostility to the great essential features of Christianity.

In the sensational romances which occupy such large space in these periodicals, and help to sell them, we find disguised under a graceful and artistic style, a secret hostility to the *Inspiration of Scripture*. The tendency is not so much to contradict or gainsay the written Word, but to make it amenable to the authority of reason. The tendency is "to take away," as one has observed, "its value as supplying an objective standard both of truth and duty—making the Bible not *the* word of God, but only *a* word of God which is to be interpreted and acted upon only in the measure that it receives the seal of the individual consciousness which has brought itself into harmony with the absolute will of God."

We find also in these stories a *theory of sin* that must, if it prevails, strike at the root of social order as well as at the root of the doctrines of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Their favourite idea of God is that of a father who rules his family with a slack, sickly sentimental hand, allowing his children, like an Epicurean deity destitute of moral anger, to do with Him and His rules as they see fit, suggesting to readers of the Bible, where we find God a king as well as a father, the indignant complaint of Jehovah against such treatment. "A son honoureth his father and a servant his master, if then I be a father where is mine honour; and if I be a master where is my fear, saith the Lord of hosts unto you, O priests that despise my name, and ye say wherein have we despised thy name?"

We find further in these sensationalist tales a *theory of self-merit* that is opposed to the Gospel way of obtaining the favour of God. A happy life here and hereafter is expected by these

romancers, not on the ground of evangelical faith, repentance and good works, but on ethical grounds pure and simple. Full of belief in man's innate goodness, and relying for acceptance with God on the plea of their virtues, the heroes of these religious novels adopt in substance the proud language of Mr Mill, "If, from this position of integrity and morality we are to be sent to hell, to hell we will go." With such writers the favourite portion of Scripture is the Sermon on the Mount, as being "a very lovely song to the sinful soul of man," forgetting that its blessing on obedience implies a curse on disobedience, and that it deals not only with outward conduct but with inward motives, with such intense spirituality as once caused a good man, who knew his own heart to exclaim—"God save me from the Sermon on the Mount when I am judged in the last day."

Very decided also do we find the hostility of these serial stories to *definite doctrinal beliefs*. The head and the heart, the intellect and the feelings are very often, in these stories, brought into antagonism, as if the intellect which deals with dogmas must be seized and imprisoned before the heart can find room to grow and "beat time to the music of the spheres." There is no end to the insinuations that all written creeds and confessions are evil, and only evil continually, cramping, contracting, and hardening the heart, arresting all free inquiry, and withering the spiritual life, as if God should grant men a revelation of truth and yet leave them to believe as much or as little of it as they chose; or as if men like Paul, and John, and Peter, and Augustine, and Luther and Calvin, and Wesley, and Whitefield, and Edwards, and Chalmers were not men of decided doctrine and definite beliefs; or as if their trees of righteousness were bound to be covered with blossoms, and in their season with richest fruit, and yet have no such unsightly and unnecessary things as crooked dismal roots below ground, or have them, if necessary, like orchids in the air.

If the inspiration of the Scriptures, if the demerit of sin, if the atoning work of Christ, and other kindred doctrines are old, out of

date and ready to vanish away, then let Christians countenance, cherish and circulate Magazines that by a slow process of neglect and contempt are killing these doctrines from out of the hearts of their young and unguarded readers. But if we are not yet prepared to abandon the fundamentals of our Christian faith it is time to begin to discriminate between a so-called Christian press that is secretly undermining these foundations, and a truly Christian press that is, in the face of popular tastes and sometimes at a loss of popular patronage, labouring to defend them.

There is, however, in the land a true Christian press. We are glad to recognize in the serial issues of the American Tract Society, especially in their "Illustrated Christian Weekly," publications of a decidedly Christian character, reverent towards the word of God, evangelical in their views as to the ground of a sinner's justification, and definite, but not narrow, in their doctrinal creed. The same praise belongs to the publications of the London Tract Society, which issues on an average about a million of various publications every week. Issued by a private individual, (Mr. Hastings of Boston,) the "Christian" does fearless and faithful work in behalf of evangelical truth and righteousness, as do the various issues of the Stirling (Scotland) Press, originated by Mr. Drummond, who has lately gone to his rest. The "Family Treasury," the "Christian Treasury," the "London Christian," and the "British Workman," are worthy the confidence that many years service in the field of unsectarian and evangelical truth claims for them from all that love the Lord. Nor should we omit from the list of honour, the Rev. Charles Bullock, an evangelical clergyman of the Church of England, "to whom the cardinal features of the gospel are as precious as they are to any man in England," who, we understand, owns now a large publishing office of his own. His serials, *Home Words*, *The Day of Days*, *The Fireside*, *Hand and Heart*, are no less popular than they are evangelical, for it is said that one of them has attained to the extraordinary circulation of two hundred and fifty thousand.

In the Press there lies to the hand of Christians an instrument for advancing the Kingdom of the Redeemer, the importance of which has not yet dawned, in its full glory, on the minds of Christ's disciples. Had the modern press been ready to the hand of Paul and his fellow-labourers, as it is in our day, to the hand of their successors in the work of evangelizing the world, we can easily believe that its energies would have been taxed to its utmost capacity by the apostles in writing and editing, and by the people in spreading over the world the glad tidings by means of the printed page. In a recent work on pastoral theology by Dr. Murphy, of Philadelphia, (reviewed in these pages this month) we find, (a new thing in such books) a section or two devoted to the "duty of the pastor in regard to religious literature." "This subject," Dr. Murphy says, "the minister should look into, and endeavour to have his people benefited by the rich stores of instruction which are flowing out from the religious press. He may draw much important aid for his work from this source. The periodical religious press, when habitually perused, will undoubtedly make the people more intelligent, and consequently more interested in the Kingdom of Christ; it will supplement the teachings of the pastor; it will enforce, by adding additional authority, the truths which are uttered from the pulpit. If the religious journals did no more than take the place of, and so crowd out, the pernicious literature that is issuing from so many other presses it would be an unspeakable blessing to the church and the world. That pastor is neglecting a splendid auxiliary to his work who is not using every effort to induce his people to take and read papers which are devoted to the spread of the righteousness of Christ, the salvation of souls, and purifying the lives of believers. . . . He should make this recommendation and urge it strongly from the pulpit. He should enter into the matter more particularly as he goes about from house to house."

Under the biting lash of Spurgeon's whip does our *Canada Christian Monthly*, in any fairness come? Are there found in its columns, "Religious puffs, exaggerated reports of meetings, one-sided

biographical sketches, sickly sentimental novels, columns thrown open for the discussion of every species of unbelief?" Have we not claimed for God's Word a place of honourable supremacy in our homes, schools and churches? Have we made light of sin, or viewed conscience as a faculty subordinate in man's moral economy? What position has Christ, his work, his authority, his glory, held in our columns? Refusing to meddle with the points of difference between evangelical denominations, have we therefore yielded up definite beliefs on the great essentials of our common faith? Seeking, according to our motto, unity in things essential, and liberty in things indifferent, have we in other things forgotten charity? Have we sought the instruction, comfort and edification of our readers rather than their applause? These questions it does not become us to answer. We leave the answer with those who have perused our pages for the last four years. If, however, we stand approved as faithful to God and his Christ to the extent of our judgment and ability, we do no wrong in asking those who think so to help us to gain admission to persons and places where our *Monthly* is unknown. That our publication is not based on selfish motives is surely attested by its character, and also by the fact, that at no period since its inception has it paid expenses. It is plain, that on that footing it cannot exist very long. The ultimate issue lies very much, as this year draws near its close, in the hands of those readers and friends who have in the past rendered generous service and given us unselfish assistance. With their help, now that prosperity is once again visiting our dominion, our *Monthly* may, before the year ends, be placed on a footing that it may be a permanent witness in the Dominion for the truth as it is in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Living Preachers.

THE LORD A STRONG TOWER.

BY THE REV. JAMES CAMERON, CHATSWORTH, ONTARIO.

"The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe."—PROV. xviii. 10.



PROVERB," a certain writer remarks, "is the wisdom of many and the wit of one." The wise and reflective among men observe the course of events and draw their conclusions; but it needs the wit of a mind gifted above the rest to embody these conclusions in the terse and sententious form of a proverb. Our text is one of the proverbs of Solomon; but before Solomon's time the truth contained in the text was experienced and expressed by Solomon's father. The wit is Solomon's; but the wisdom is David's. Again and again during his perilous life, David found the "Lord a strong tower," again and again in his psalms this truth comes forward, and often, no doubt, he told the consoling truth to his gifted son. The *language* here is the language of Solomon; but the *experience* is the experience of David, and of men like him who live in troublous times.

What is meant by the name of the Lord? In what respect is it a high tower? From what does it give safety? These are the three important things in regard to which our text suggests humble enquiry in dependence on divine help.

I. WHAT IS MEANT BY THE NAME OF THE LORD?—Proper names among the Hebrews had a deeper meaning than among any other nation with whose literature we are acquainted. Its name was often given to a child at the command of God, as intended to express the character, or mission of the future man. The name Jesus, given to our Lord at his birth, was given to show the nature and character of his work as the Saviour of sinners. It happened again, at other times, that with a change of circumstances and character a change of name was given. When Abram was fully established in the covenant that made him the father, not only of a numerous temporal seed, but of a spiritual seed that no tongue can number—his name was changed. He was thence to be called Abraham—the father of many nations. When his grandson Jacob, proved his

great strength by wrestling with the angel, overcoming in prayer, he was called Israel—the Prince of God. Seeing this was the tendency of the Hebrews and of their language you might expect that in this tongue the name of God would be identical with his character. His high and holy names, such as Elohim, Jehovah, were given by himself, who alone knows himself, to manifest to his people his true character in relation to the wants of his people.

By the name of God in our text we understand, therefore the character of God. Just as your name is the character you bear among those that know you, so the name of God is the character he bears among those that know him; the revelation he has made to them of his existence, his unity, his infinity, his glory. When Moses asked God to show him His glory, "The Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." We see here that the proclamation of the name of the Lord, a proclamation of his perfections, a revelation of himself to Moses, and through Moses to Israel, and through Israel to us by a description fuller than ever given before of his character and attributes.

By understanding his name in this sense you will perceive a depth and a fulness not otherwise seen in those passages where this expression occurs, "The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee; some trust in chariots and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God." That is, we will call to mind as our trust, *what God is*, what God has made known concerning himself, and what he has promised to be and to do for his people.

If this be so our text amounts to the assertion that the revelation God makes of himself to a righteous man, by his word and Spirit in Christ—this knowledge enables the Christian to find shelter and defence in his God in time of trial and trouble.

II. IN WHAT RESPECT IS THE NAME OF GOD A STRONG TOWER?—A strong tower is a very significant figure to the natives of eastern countries. In countries where law is weak, where might is too often right, towers are built with strong walls and iron gates, and several stories high, as a

refuge from sudden danger. Fancy men at work in the fields, children at play, and women within their tents. The alarm is given that the enemy is in sight. Driving their cattle before them, the men make for the tower. Children fling away their toys, and mothers with their babes rush for the tower. Those who are in time get in, and the heavy gates are swung to and they are safe; while these who are too late fall into the hands of the enemy. There was a time when scenes like these occurred even in Britain; and these high castles that frown down from betting cliffs with iron-barred windows, and loop-holes, and battlements, were built not so much for the chief, but for the safety of the whole clan, when attacked by some neighbouring foe. What that strong tower is to these people, the name of the Lord, *i.e.*, the character of the Lord, is to the righteous. Wherein lies the force of this figure? In what respect is the name of the Lord a strong tower?

It is a strong tower (1) because of God's *mercy*. A tower, however strong, would be no strong tower to you if you could find no entrance into it. All the strength and glory of God would be no protection, but rather a terror, but for his mercy. In the proclamation made to Moses, this is the very first thing that meets us—**MERCIFUL**. Over the entrance of the tower is written these cheering words, "The Lord our God is merciful," "Knock and it shall be opened." Men of all classes, of all dispositions, of all sins and sorrows, at all seasons, in all circumstances, have knocked and been admitted. Manasseh, Magdalene, Saul, the superstitious Ephesians, the licentious Corinthians, the proud Romans, all found entrance. Some are let in at once, like blind Bartimeus; some are kept waiting like the Syrophenician woman; some get in after a severe struggle, like Saul of Tarsus, and some easily and gently, like Timothy and Lydia, but to every one that continues to knock, sooner or later it shall be opened.

It is a strong tower again (2) because of God's *patience*. Abraham's tent was no strong tower to poor Hagar, after she had quarrelled with its inmates. They had grown weary of her ways and her temper, and she must leave. But God never deals so with his children. You have read the fable of the wolf that heard the mother threatening to cast out her child. The wolf waited in vain for his prey, for the mother's patience was too great to do this thing. The Lord will not cast away his people. Inside the door there is this inscription: "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgment; if they break my statutes and keep not my commandments, then will I visit their trans-

gressions with the rod and their iniquity with stripes; nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail." Psalm lxxxix. 30. "The Lord is slow to anger:" Nahum i. 3. "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and of great mercy:" Psalm ciii. 8. This patience is one of the remarkable *letters* in the name of God as he himself proclaimed it. "It is put in the middle," as Charnock remarks, "linking mercy and truth together."

It is a strong tower (3) because of God's *goodness*. The bare walls of a tower will not suffice for those who take shelter there. At night they are weary, they must have beds and couches on which to repose; they will feel thirsty, there must be a deep well to supply them with drink; when hungry, they must have food; when sick, physic; when cast down, comfort; when night comes, they must have light; and in cold, clothing to keep them warm. All this God provides for his people. Paul knew this when he said, in writing to the Philippians, "My God shall supply all your need." All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. "God's throne is a throne of holiness, but it is a throne of grace:" Heb. iv. 16; "a throne encircled with a rainbow:" Rev. iv. 23; in sight like to an emerald—"an emblem of the covenant that hath the pleasantness," as an old writer remarks, "of a colour (green) delightful to the eye betokening mercy."

The name of the Lord is a strong tower (4) because of God's *infinite power*. In vain an open door, in vain patience, in vain every comfort, if the doors, and walls, and foundation are not strong to resist all the force of the enemy. The enemies of God's people are many and strong. Were they not strong when Pharaoh and his hosts pursued the handful of slaves? Were they not strong when Sennacherib came down upon Jerusalem? These are only faint images of our invisible enemies. We wrestle not with flesh and blood. But God is stronger than these all. He is strong by his *Providence*. The elements, the seasons, cold and heat, are his ministers to do his will. Strong by his *angels*, ministering spirits; strong by his *word*—"thy word hath quickened me;" strong by his *servants*—"comforted us by the coming of Titus;" strong by his *Spirit*, so that Paul could say, "I can do all things." It was this view of the character and promises of God to his people that filled the mind of the apostle when he said, "If God be for us who can be against us? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?"

Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay in all, etc. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate us from the love of God."

The name of the Lord is a strong tower (5) because of his *unchangeableness*. With God "there is no variableness nor shadow of turning." He is the centre of the circle of his universe. The circumference is always moving; the centre is fixed. This is not a distinct attribute of God, but is a glory belonging to all his attributes. God's unchangeableness is like a golden thread that runs through the whole web of his being. Without this there would be no comfort nor certainty to his creatures in any of his perfections. "How cloudy," some one remarks, "would be his blessedness if it were changeable; how dim his wisdom if it might be obscured; how feeble his power if it were capable to be sickly and languish; how would mercy lose much of its lustre if it could change into wrath, and justice much of its dread if it could be turned into mercy, while the object of justice remains unfit for mercy, and one that hath need of mercy continues only fit for the divine fury." The tower over whose gate *mercy* is written, on whose walls and bars are written *power*, and within whose rooms *goodness* and *patience* reign, even that strong tower would cease to be a strong tower if God could change and his mercy become hatred, his power weakness, his goodness cruelty, and his patience fury. But the Lord "is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." "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," Isa. liv. 10. "Can a woman forget her sucking child? She may. Yet will not I," etc.

III. FROM WHAT DOES THE NAME OF GOD GIVE SAFETY? We must beware lest we take up low carnal views of the promises of God. It was on this rock the church, in the days of our Saviour, made shipwreck. They looked for the kingdom of God to come by observation. Let it not be so with us. In the strong tower the righteous man is *safe*. There is no doubt of the fact. But what is the meaning of the fact? He is safe from what? He is not necessarily safe from *sufferings*. God's own Son "learned obedience by the things that he suffered." He is not safe from *persecution*. To his people Christ says, "If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you." He is not safe from *temptation*, for the believer is told to count it all "joy when he falls into divers temptations." He

is not safe from *weaknesses*, for the most eminent of God's servants—Paul—had a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet him. What, then, is there safety from? One word expresses the answer—*EVIL*. The righteous in the strong tower is safe from evil, as we understand from the terms of the prayer of Christ: "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil:" John xvii. 15. "Those whom Jesus saves," Matthew Henry says, "He saves from their sins; from the guilt of sin by the merit of his death; from the dominion of sin by the spirit of his grace. In saving from sin he saves them from wrath, and the curse and all misery here and hereafter."

If sufferings are *evil*, the righteous shall be delivered from them. "He shall keep them as the apple of his eye." If temptations are evil, God will not "suffer them to be tempted above what they are able to bear." If persecution is an evil, God can check it. "Be not afraid," said Christ to Paul in Corinth, "for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee:" Acts xviii. 9, 10. If weakness is an evil, he can make the weak strong. "When I am weak, then am I strong." 2 Cor. xii. 10.

The righteous in that tower is safe, as the tree is safe which is laden with fruit in autumn, even although the winter had stripped it of its leaves, though the spring frosts had nipped some of its buds, and though fierce winds had well-nigh shaken it out of root. That ship you call safe, not the one that never left the dock, but the one that has taken its crew and cargo safe to port, though its sails may have been torn, and its masts lost, and its hull shattered in the perilous voyage. In this sense the name of the Lord is a strong tower to his people. "Not," as Calvin says, "to be free from all conflict, but to be free from defeat; not to be safe from the changes of seasons, but from barrenness; not to be safe from storms, but from shipwreck."

In this high tower the lives of God's people are safe till their work is done; their property is safe as far as that is for their good and God's glory; their children in so far as they are in the covenant; their soul without any condition, and this is the main business, is safe—safe from *disturbance*. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee" from *despair*, "cast down, but not in despair;" from *death*, "we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

Illustrations of this glorious truth are scattered thick in history. Ael ran into this high tower and was safe, though he fell slain under the

hand of an angry brother. Noah, and the waters of the flood could not come near him. Abraham, and hear what God says to him, "Fear not, I am thy shield." Joseph, and we read, "the Lord was with Joseph." David, and this is the way, Abigail expressed the truth of our text, "A man hath risen to pursue thee and seek thy soul; but the soul of my Lord shall be bound with the bundle of life with the Lord my God." Paul, and he says, when in prison, "For the which cause I suffer these things, nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day:" 2 Tim. i. 12.

And now two questions of importance rise out of this subject which I must press on you.

1. What is your high tower? Every man has some high tower, to which he runs in time of distress. Every creature having life has a high tower somewhere. When the sportsman fires his gun you see the frightened animals betake themselves each to his refuge. Some run to their holes in the earth, some bury themselves in the thick bushes, some flee with all speed, and some take to the wing and soar aloft or settle on some high crag where no harm can come near. So with men. The rich man's wealth is his high tower. When Esau lost his birth-right what was his comfort? "Behold thy brother comforteth himself purposing to kill thee." But Jacob, as at Bethel, went to God. Saul lost his kingdom. "Honour me before the Lord." David lost all at Ziklag—wives and estate—and "he encouraged himself in his God." So elsewhere—"My heart and my flesh fail but God is the strength of my heart." The name of God is the only strong tower. Its door is open. Seek it, *strive* to enter, for many shall seek to enter and shall not be able.

2. What is your position in this high tower? It is not enough that you find entrance. To your safe position in that strong tower certain *duties* belong. When chased by enemies a man feels thankful when thick walls lies between him and them. Be *thankful*. Let the language of your life be "Thanks be unto God for this unspeakable gift." It is your duty to be *pitiful*. While you are safe thousands are perishing outside the walls of the tower. Is there nothing you can do by word, or Bible, or tract, or example, or money, to bring into shelter these poor perishing ones? It is your duty to be *watchful*. The strong tower is not a place for sleep, but for earnest conflict. From your vantage ground you must annoy and destroy the enemy. Shoot your arrows fast and sharp against the many enemies that seek, in their madness, to undermine the tower or batter

down its walls. It is your duty to be *ambitious*, with a holy ambition. There are dungeons in the tower, dark and dismal, into which the master thrusts, at times, unruly and ungrateful inmates. David could tell you of these fearful pits. And there are sublime heights in that tower whence may be seen, as from the delectable mountains, the celestial city with its walls of precious stone, its gates of pearl and its streets of pure gold. Beware of these dungeons, and aspire after these upper rooms, where the air is always pure, and the prospect always beautiful. In proportion to your watchfulness and diligence and honesty and purity will your position be in the strong-hold of God. Stage after stage do true believers rise, till these fears and these desires, which troubled them in the lower stages of their lives have no more place in them. Elevated far above that which men vainly vex themselves with, you may, on the top of that strong tower enjoy, with the angels, a Divine contentment. From that glorious heaven, where you might thus reside, you could despise the vicissitudes and vanities of the earth, and see its elements rage, and its idols perish without any fear that its storms and changes can ever reach that secure spot where you stand. Your whole life might then be a perpetual feast, in which "free from the travail and turmoil of worldlings, contemplating in spirit the glory of the palace of our Lord, meditating on his promises, breathing after his benefits, and enjoying them for the present by faith and hope, you could in repose wait for the day of your glorious triumph."

Poetry.

THE OLD PARISHIONER AND THE MODERN PARSON.

"Why, John, I haven't seen your face
In church for weeks, I know."

"No, sir, it's such a queerish place,—
When it's restored, I'll go."

"When it's restored? Why, John, you've seen
The chancel that's just built,—
With painted windows, carved oak screen,
And reredos all of gilt!

“ With decoration it abounds ;
 There’s a new altar, too ;
 The organ cost three hundred pounds,
 It’s all restored quite new.”

“ Yes,—like old Ned, the other day—
 What had a stroke, I mean—
 He’s quite restored to health they say :
 But, lor’, his mind’s gone clean.

“ Dark windows may be beautifu’
 For them as likes the look ;
 But I, with old eyes getting dull,
 Want light to read my book.

“ When I was young (you’d think it odd),
 The roses climbed in there ;
 They always made me think of God,
 And all his tender care.

“ But now, if I look up, I greet
 Them figures done in paints ;
 I’d go a long way not to meet
 Saints, if such folks be saints.”

“ Ah, John, they didn’t teach high art
 When you were put to school ;
 But how do you like the singing part,—
 Come, that’s a better rule ?”

“ Why, sir, they’re thinking far too much
 How tunes go now-a-days ;
 Give me the old hundredth psalm and such,
 That’s more what I call praise.

“ We used to sing it—such a crowd—
 Maybe the notes weren’t true ;
 Maybe we sang a bit too loud,
 Because our hearts sang too.

“ But now, my grandson—pert young lad—
 He says he’s got much higher ;
 Says he, ‘ You’re not to sing, grandad,
 You’ll interrupt the choir.’

“ “ You thinks a deal about that thing,
 The choir,’ I says to him ;
 ‘ But I can’t see why you can’t sing
 Without your bed-gown, Jim.’

“ New chancel’s mighty fine, but ne’er
 Can we make out ; who knows
 What’s gone with the Commandments there,—
 What have you done with those ?

"You're all for pretty tiles and bricks,
For carving, gilt, and scroll;
What good could them tall candlesticks
Do to a poor dark soul?"

"Sir, there's a many things restored
No use to such as me;
We want to hear about the Lord,
You only talk of She!

"We used to pray the prayers, and then
The parson prayed from heart;
Now, you all seem to think Amen
The most important part.

"But, sir, I scarce like telling you
How it sounds when you intones."
"Well, John, what is it like? Speak true."
"Machine what grinds the bones."

"We had a minister once, sir,—
'Twas long before you came;
A man that was a minister
Not only in the name.

"Your decorations, copes, and stoles,
He didn't need such aid;
He cared too much for our poor souls,
To think how his gown was made,

"I've seen him pleading with us thus,
With tears in eyes he stood;
Somehow those tears preached more to us
Than twenty sermons could.

"The rich and poor came far and near,
The church would overflow;
It's getting full again I hear—
Folks come to see the Show.

"Now, it's most like the play I see
In London town one day,
All very well for a play maybe,
But not for prayer, I say.

"Do you think, sir, such a queerish whim
Can please the Lord, forsooth?
He said—we were to worship Him
In spirit and in truth.

"So that's why I don't come, you know;
I will, when it's restored;
But now, sir, I don't care to go,
Because I fears the Lord."

AT LAKE NYANZA.

IN MEMORIAM: DR. JOHN SMITH, MEDICAL MISSIONARY.

Sadly sounds an echoing death-wail o'er the ocean,
 Flung by vagrant winds from out the great lone land;
 Cold and still a heart that glowed with true devotion,
 Bright as love-lit lamp amid that mission band.
 While the dew of youth lay thick on life's fair blossom,
 And the beams of hope streamed o'er it with a smile,
 Drooped the head so martyr-like on Africa's bosom,
 By the living fount that feeds the flooded Nile.

What last thoughts were thine, O friend? What farewell vision
 Came and went ere death in darkness sealed thine eyes,
 Till they opened wide to beauty all-Elysian
 With the sweet and shadeless sunshine of the skies?
 Ah, methinks, came trooping fancies in thy dreaming,
 Loving voices heard again, dear faces seen,
 And the silvery Solway stretched before thee gleaming,
 And Morton's moss and moorland fringed with green!

Did the swarthy children gather round thee lying,
 And pitying gaze into thy pale face meek?
 Did they build thee there "a little hut to die in,"
 And silent act the love they could not speak,
 Till came mingling with Nyanza's waves the breaking
 Of death's slow sad ripples on the eternal strand,
 And a brighter morn arose than that awaiting
 O'er the inland sea that laves M'tesa's land?

Here at home I sit and gaze with sweet, sad pleasure
 On thy living features photographed by art;
 But warm memory hold for aye a richer treasure
 In the fadeless likeness graven on the heart.
 Now I trace thy wandering steps in those far regions
 By the maps of travel marked where men have trod,
 Till swift thought goes forth from Africa's dusky legions
 To track the spirit's journey back to God.

And thy last request that came when hands were clasping
 In a long farewell, still rings within my ears—
 "Pray, dear friend, for me, for Africa! now grasping
 The promised grace through faith I soothe all fears,
 And hasten on the way of duty. He hath spoken
 Whose Word is true—He helps where He commands;
 The triumph of the cross is sure, behold the token!
 'Ethiopia shall yet stretch out to God her hands.'"

Stricken down so soon! God's ways are deep beyond our seeing;
 We reason not but know His will is best.
 Faith and hope unravel the strange mystery of our being,
 And love 'mid life's sore crosses can find rest.

Shall dread failure mar his work though man may falter,
Or vainly flow hearts' tears and martyr's blood?
Nay, each living offering laid on Truth's pure altar
Shall be blest to earth, and counted dear by God.

Livingstone.

—Robt. Sanders, B.D.

Christian Thought.

PREACHING AND THE TRAINING OF PREACHERS.

BY DR. HOWARD CROSBY, NEW YORK.

[This paper was read before the General Council of Presbyterians held in July in Edinburgh.]

IT is the work of the pastor as a preacher which we propose to consider in this paper. We may very readily divide the subject into three parts, having reference respectively to the aim he has in view, the means he has to use, and the manner in which he is to use them.

FIRST, THE AIM HE HAS IN VIEW.—This aim should be no other than that for which the Head of the Church commissioned him, and this we find clearly stated in Eph. iv, 11-12—“ And He gave some to be apostles, and some to be prophets, and some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, with a view to perfect the saints, unto a ministerial work, unto a building up of the body of Christ.” All the forms of Christian ministry, then, have the one aim—the rearing of the spiritual and only true Church of Christ to its full proportions, as they shall appear in the final day of glory. The evangelists gather in from without, and the pastors and teachers use the material thus gathered, with whatever the Church itself furnishes, in strengthening, enlarging, beautifying, and unifying the whole structure. We have interpreted this passage of the spiritual Church, first, because the body of Christ is a spiritual body, according to the Scripture (1 Cor. xiii. 27), “ Ye are the body of Christ,” where no reference is had to an outward organization; and, secondly, because the perfecting of God's saints or holy ones is a spiritual process, the author of which is the Holy Spirit, whose work cannot be marked by

man-drawn lines. The moment we lose sight of this spiritual character of the Church, we introduce other aims than the perfecting of the saints and the edifying of the body of Christ. We then strive to establish forms, we seek to exalt parties, we magnify trifles, and the builders, instead of working together to complete the common structure, are tempted away into by-plays and fancies that often even exhibit antagonisms. The sanctification of believers is a process, and not a new birth, as is conversion. The young plant is to be watched and tended. There is the blade and the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. Pastors and teachers are God's husbandmen to care for this. This is God's order for bringing the crop to the harvest. There is no short cut to the desired end, as some would have it. There must be experience, and experience takes time. No man can wish himself or believe himself into the results of experience. His effort will only end in a vain conceit, and put him out of the order of a true growth. The two favourite symbols of the spiritual life, as given us in the Scriptures, are the building mounting higher and higher toward completion, and the plant growing larger and larger from the seed. Now, this spiritual life thus advancing must not be confounded with æsthetic and intellectual culture. In this way Christianity is confounded with civilization. While it is very true that spiritual life must civilize men, it is very far from truth that civilization Christianizes men. Greece, in her Periclean day of art and philosophy, and literature, was a debased nation (or cluster of nations) in her religion. The age of Italian culture under the Medicis was an age of rampant vice; and the Olympus of Louis Quatorze displayed very few features of Christianity. The aims of the Christian preacher is not to civilize man, however naturally such a result may follow his faithful activity. He does not teach agriculture or the fine arts. He wishes man to receive God's revealed truth which makes wise to salvation. He deals altogether with that truth, because he acts simply as God's messenger and agent to build up the soul in godliness or godlikeness. Many a Christian minister has apparently forgotten that man was a sinner and needed to be saved from his sins, and that he was ignorant and needed to be instructed in righteousness, and accordingly has ceased to perfect the saint, while he gave his attention to adorn the citizen. Perhaps, the most insidious enemy of the truth is in action, when culture takes the place of religion, and the minister of Christ becomes the social or political philosopher. As against then, the mere establishment of ecclesiastical organization, or the mere regard for man's temporal welfare, the aim of the Christian preacher is

the development of the life of Christ in the individual man, and so in the community. For this end only he has received the commission from his Lord, and in this aim only can he expect the Lord's presence—"Go ye and disciple all nations," is the commission; "Lo, I am with you alway," is the promise. We cannot disjoin the two. The discipling to Christ is clearly defined as promoting and maintaining the union of branches to the vine—a life-union by which much fruit is developed through the vine's force. "I am the vine (says our Lord), ye are the branches. . . severed from me ye can do nothing." "Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." Bring souls to Christ and confirming them in Christ; that is discipling, this is the Church's work (through its representatives especially wrought), and in this work the Lord's prospering presence is pledged. The pastor's especial part of this work is the confirmation of the discipleship, and to this end his preaching is to be mainly directed.

In this duty we consider secondly, THE MEANS HE HAS TO USE.—As the end is a spiritual one, the means are neither material nor carnal. The use of physical force to build up the Church of Christ might be treated simply as an absurdity, if, alas! the theory had not crystalized itself into fearful practice, staining the earth with the blood of its victims, and bringing the name of Christianity into reproach and contempt before the world. To bring a soul into union with Christ, or to establish a soul in this heavenly alliance, is so exotic to all natural thought that nothing can be found in the natural apparatus of man for the work. God only can furnish the means, as He alone has revealed the aim. His word is the spiritual weapon. It is living and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. It is the entrance of that Word that giveth light. It is that Word which is the truth that purifies. It is that Word which regenerates and makes wise unto salvation. It is that Word in which the Spirit dwells, and with which the Spirit acts upon the heart of man. There is no other agency which shares the honor with the Word. It is the only lamp for our feet, the only light for our path. It is a jealous Word, as God is a jealous God. It will have no partner in making wise the simple and in converting the soul. It is from God. All else is from man. It is that Word, therefore, which the preacher is to wield in the administration of his high office. All truth is susceptible of illustration, arrangement, and comparison, and can be pressed on the attention by

argument drawn from its own character. This fact suggests the true range of the preacher's address to his people. He is never to lose sight or let his hearers lose sight of the divine revelation. Each effort of his mind and tongue is only to make God's truth more apparent in its relations and applications. If he turn to erect a philosophic scheme, the result of his own speculations, he is no longer a preacher of God's Word. If he become a mere councillor of worldly wisdom, though he may be a very useful citizen, he has laid aside his distinctive calling. If he seek to amuse and delight his audience with elaborate rhetoric, he has abandoned his holy work. Whatever will turn the attention of his hearers from God's Word to man's word is false preaching, however favourably it may be considered by the community. Very different from all this is the fact that the preacher must use his tones, his look, his action, in full sympathy with his theme. The rhetoric, as well as the philosophy and wisdom, that legitimately flows from the power of God's Word in his own heart, partakes of the holiness of its source, and is not to be confounded with that wisdom of words which the Greeks seek after. The man who speaks God's Word is a living man with his own marked individuality, and not an automaton—(laughter)—and hence the forms of his deliverances must partake of his idiosyncrasy, but these are only forms, and if natural, or if even cultivated with godly purpose, will not mar or hinder, but rather fitly present the truth of God. There appears often a virtual distrust of the power of God's Word in the preaching of our day. A Christian minister thinks he must meet the enemies of the truth on their ground and not on God's. He must argue with the Materialist or the Pantheist on purely scientific or metaphysical grounds. He must enter the lists as a geologist, a biologist, or a linguist. He must talk learnedly of the stone age, and pre-Adamite man, of protoplasm and natural selection. In order to this he must read all the philosophers and scientists, and become a cosmical Humboldt, while the book of God must be proportionately neglected. Well, Satan gets him down into the world's arena and is satisfied. He'll not convert souls or edify saints in that region, but he'll get many a commendation in the newspapers. We desire to protest against this perversion of preaching. We insist that the preacher is uttering a revelation from God, and not acting a philosopher of the schools. The Bible furnishes him with quite strong enough weapons for any form of infidelity. The battle can be fought out on the grand principles enunciated in the Word, and need never be carried into the detailed technics of a speciality. If a preacher knows his Bible well, he is ready

for any opponent from Porphyry to Strauss. God made his revelation a complete one for its purpose of saving man, and there is a dishonouring of that revelation when the imaginations of men are deemed a necessary addendum to it. Men's affections, not their intellects, are the hindrances to God's truth, and accordingly if the contest can be brought into the intellectual field, and so relieve the heart from the pressure of spiritual truth, men are satisfied. Argumentation can go on for ever there with much plausibility, the unbeliever being perhaps more thoroughly acquainted with scientific facts which he can dexterously manage to his advantage, while his heart is unassailed and unmolested in its godlessness. The Bible is God's attack on the heart, and preachers lose all their vantage when they prefer man's attack on the intellect.

We consider, thirdly, the MANNER IN WHICH HE IS TO USE THE SCRIPTURES. First, negatively, in no way in which he may mar their force. Any putting of the man before his message is a detraction from the majesty of the Word. A direct egotism in dogmatic assertion or an indirect egotism in the parade of learning on the part of the preacher is an obscuration of the Scriptures. His manner of dealing with the sacred oracles should show him a receiver as well as a distributor. He should act as the disciples who took loaves from the Master and distributed them to the multitude. His humility would point the hearer to the common source whence he as well as they derived their spiritual food. It is not what Dr. This or Professor That says which edifies the Church, but what the Holy Ghost saith, and every one who occupies the high position of a teacher in the Church should beware of a species of blasphemy equally in uttering human dicta as the Word of God, and in uttering the Word of God as if it were human dicta. If egotism be a grievous fault in preaching, still more grievous is the transmutation of instruction to amusement. To rob the Word of its solemnity, to associate the great themes of sin, judgment, repentance, pardon, the Cross of Christ, and eternal life, with merriment and laughter is an outrage upon the truth and a woe to the Church. The trifling jest and low wit that sometimes disgraces the pulpit must, we may believe, send a shudder through the ranks of the attending angels who watch the movements of the Church on earth. The eccentricities of the pulpit, as these buffooneries are euphuistically called, are but new wounds inflicted on our Lord in the house of His friends, causing deep grief to spiritual minds, and hardening careless hearts against all the approaches of the divine grace. Loose-minded men flock to such preachers, and their churches are Sunday theatres, not for edification, but for titillation.

A rough or careless manner in preaching may mar the delivery of the truth; suggesting a mere perfunctory performance, and so, we may say, taking the heart out of the service. This is an error all too common. The minister goes through his duty as though it were the turning of a crank or the working of a pump. His matter is most mechanically arranged, and his manner matches his arrangement. Many lean congregations derive their emaciated condition from this sort of tending. Instead of a shepherd the minister is no more than a hireling, and careth not for the sheep. He gets his pay, and then, alas! has to perform his task. Now, in direct opposition to all this, we say, secondly and positively, that the manner of the preacher should be earnest, natural, and solemn, and the preaching should be simple, clear, and fresh. Earnestness becomes the awful importance of the truth conveyed. Where eternal life or death is at stake, anything short of earnestness is mockery. A soul alive to the transcendent character of Scripture themes will speak so that men will fain hear, and any personal defects of the speaker will be forgotten in the impression made by his fervency. The seraph has touched his lips with a live coal from off the altar, and that is enough. He has an eloquence far beyond the schools. Aye, the school eloquence he will avoid. He will shun it as the wisdom of this world, which is not to be mingled with the gospel of Christ. He will not be thinking how he should accent this syllable or round that sentence, ever looking in a glass—(laughter)—as the elocutionists do, but he will be himself, while forgetting himself, and speak out of the fulness of a godly heart. This was Paul's way. This will be his way. His naturalness will thus be a necessary accompaniment of his earnestness. Equally necessary will be his solemnity. He speaks about God, before whom the angelic host will veil their faces, and he speaks about human sin and misery and agony, and he speaks about a cross all bloody with the drops of expiation, and amid such thoughts he can only be solemn. The Bible is a solemn book. It brings a solemn message. Its proclaimer must be a solemn preacher. His preaching will be simple, because he has to deal with youthful or untrained minds, and because the gospel in Jesus Christ is a simplicity. It is adapted to the young and illiterate, because it concerns the development of the affections and not that of the noetic powers. Preaching above the head of the people is correctly noted as a grievous error in the Christian ministry. The effect upon the congregation may be imposing, but it is not edifying. They may admire the learning of the preacher according to the law, "*vanæ gloriæ pro mirifica*," but there is surely no pasture for

the sheep of the Covenant in all this. For like reasons the preaching should be clear, not intertisted in its argument, or choked with tropes or Delphic in its allusions, or careless in its connections. Clean definitions, plain arguments, incisive language should be used by a distinct and expressive voice. With this the preaching should be ever fresh. This can be the result only of faithful and continual study, a constant searching of the word and an eye trained to see its illustrations and adaptations. The preacher who depends upon old preparations becomes dull, monotonous, commonplace. To the thorough student of the Bible all nature and life become reflective of its glories, and the divine illumination thus penetrates the universal frame of things, till everything gives forth a holy light. But it is only the Bible student, with heart sanctified in his work, who can so mount from nature to nature's God. Nature's infinite variety will minister to him in illustrating the Word. Moreover, a careful habit of study will place the truth itself in a hundred different phases and positions to the mind, the knowledge of which (like the varied views of a statue) gives roundness and relief to the subject. Now, if our view of the aim, means and manner of the preaching be correct, we can easily draw the conclusion that the training of preachers should be pre-eminently a Biblical training. The theological seminary should be a Bible school. Text books on theology should have a secondary place to the books of exegesis. Exegetics should be a more prominent chair than systematic theology. Or rather, the systematic theology should be resolved into an exegetic theology, gathered and constructed by the students directly from the Hebrew and Greek under the skilled guidance of Biblical scholars. The great defect of some of our theological seminaries is that they do not teach the Bible. They teach about the Bible, but they do not teach the Bible itself. The power of the Church for the truth will be greatly increased when every minister goes forth to his high vocation thoroughly charged (like an electric battery) with the Word of God.

Christian Life.

MR. PETER DRUMMOND.

IN our Editorial on "The Christian Press," we made short reference to the "Stirling publications," which owe their existence, under God, to Mr. Peter Drummond. It was just the other month this remarkable man passed to his rest, dying in Edinburgh in the 79th year of his age. We have called him a remarkable man. He was all that. He was not remarkable for genius, nor learning, nor talents of any brilliant character. He was remarkable however for his zeal for the Glory of God, for his courage and devotion to the Lord's work and for the wonderful success with which his mission of benevolence was ultimately crowned.

Mr. Drummond we are told, was a native of the parish of St. Ninians, in the immediate neighbourhood of Stirling. He was one of an unusually large family, both brothers and sisters, all of them distinguished in their respective spheres. Mr. Peter Drummond's life may be said to have been passed in the town of Stirling. With two of his brothers he was a partner as seedsman in the well-known and highly-respected firm of Messrs William Drummond & Sons. The subject of this notice was a very remarkable man. For fifty years he has been a benefactor, a great blessing to the place of his abode. His career as a friend of religion began early, in the capacity of a Sabbath school teacher, in which he proved an example to many, and was greatly a promoter of that form of juvenile instruction. Nearly thirty years ago, whilst his favourite work, of which we have spoken, was not neglected, he entered on another field of service in the cause of his Lord and Master. Two things very specially stirred his ardent spirit—Sabbath-breaking and horse-racing, of which Stirling for many years, had an annual visitation. The Sabbath-breaking which stirred his mind was enacted at Cambuskenneth, a short way from Stirling, on the opposite side of the river Forth. In the fruit season crowds used to assemble to purchase the fruit, and to indulge, amidst the extensive orchards of the place, the unholy and desecrating practices to which they were there enticed. The horse-racing in the Park of Stirling, so distinguished for its beauty, and, from the earliest times, the scene of even Royal sports, some forty years ago, formed the occasion of

serious offence to all respectable people of the town and neighbourhood. During the days of the races the town was almost at the mercy of a lawless and outrageously offensive imported multitude. All men were thankful when, at length, the filthy tide had ebbed away, headed by the finely-dressed race-horses, jockies, book-makers, and followed by would-be grandees of all names and grades. Mr. Drummond began his assault against both—Sabbath desecration and the turf—by speech, using his powers in that form. This was speedily laid aside for another form of attack. He wrote and published tracts bearing upon both, the causes of annoyance and grief to those who feared God and trembled at his Word. He engaged friends to write in aid of his own efforts. He adopted tracts produced by the various tract institutions in the country. He spared no arrows. It was impossible for the frequenters of the Cambuskenneth orchards, or for the Park racecourse admirers, to escape him. He engaged a vast multitude of agents, who, armed with tracts, occupied every approach and entrance to both places, their instructions being that a tract should be put into the hand of every passer-by. The tracts had their titles—for the most part very alarming—printed in large characters on the first page. Though for the most part rejected, it was impossible to read even the headings without being startled. For a time all seemed vain. Prayer was largely made for a blessing on this effort to do good. Success at last came. The Stirling Races were abandoned; the Cambuskenneth desecrations ceased. All this led to what Mr. Drummond named “The Stirling Tract Enterprise,” which in course of a few years grew into the vast institution which it now is. The *British Messenger*, the *Gospel Trumpet* and other periodicals, with an unceasing flow of tracts of the highest value, were the immediate fruits of the enterprise.

The writer of these lines has a very distinct recollection of reading, while a Student in the University of Edinburgh, one of Mr. Drummond's early advertisements in reference to his tracts, which appeared in the *Edinburgh Witness*. It was very much out of the ordinary way of things, fitted indeed to convey the impression, which indeed, it did leave on the minds of some, that he was a fool or a fanatic. But indeed he was neither. Gradually he divested his tracts and his advertisements of this *outré* element, and called to his assistance such men as the Rev. Mr. Taylor who now edits *The British Messenger*, one of the best papers of the kind that we read. Knowing Mr. Drummond's desire to spread abroad his tracts and leaflets, the writer, in 1855, in coming to Canada, obtained from him a large parcel of tracts, which did service on board the ship

George Lingers, supplying reading matter on the Sabbath to some three or four hundred emigrants, during a voyage of some six or seven weeks. After the voyage was over there were enough left to be distributed up the St. Lawrence and onwards, till the shores of the Georgian Bay were reached, and Collingwood, then consisting of few dozen houses rising here and there like solitary sentinels in a cedar swamp among blackened stumps. Since entering on the editing of *THE CHRISTIAN MONTHLY* we have had communications from Mr. Drummond which bear witness to his sagacious head and good kindly heart.

"There is" says the *Edinburgh Weekly Review*, "scarcely any part of the habitable globe to which these publications have not penetrated, and we believe that, except the London Tract Society, nothing of the kind so extensive exists. The Tract Depot at Stirling constitutes one of the most beautiful buildings in the town. The whole transactions there are presided over (we speak of the department of publication) by the Rev. William Taylor, than whom no more competent agent could be. We believe the enterprise was never a greater success than it is at present. Mr. Drummond, though he continued a partner in the firm, gave up, for the sake of his tract engagements, all active management of the concern, at the head of which he had for many years been. In Stirling his memory will be fragrant. Of Dr Beith's congregation he was the leading elder in the kirk-session of the Free North Church for many years. Of late he has resided in Edinburgh, where his sons, in George Street, follow, with much success, their father's earliest occupation. Few men have gone down to the grave with a name more unsullied, or of whom it could more truthfully be said that he fought a good fight and laid hold on eternal life. Many in Stirlingshire, in the country at large, and in all parts of the world, will call him blessed. It seems desirable that some lengthened biography of a man who has been so much before the world, and who, in his time has been so much honoured, should be given to the public. Let us hope that his friends will think of this. The statistics of the enterprise would form an interesting item in such a narrative as we refer to. The rev. gentleman at the head of the institution has in previous cases given evidence of his qualification for such a duty. To him men will look.

Mrs. Drummond survives her husband with two sons and one daughter.

One of the leading and noble features of Mr. Drummond's work, was that he never sought like too many Publishers, of even religious books

and periodicals, to humour the public in pandering to a false taste or erroneous fancies, nor did he aim at anything beyond making his enterprise self-supporting. This we believe he accomplished. We need very much in the publishing trade men like Peter Drummond who first of all ask, Will the publication do good? leaving it as secondary question, Will the publication pay? Of course the second question must be asked but not as the first. It is reversing the order of the questions, that fill the counters of our book stores with so much trash, and burdens the mails with the same commodity in weekly and monthly instalments. We suppose that Christ's words were intended by him to reach, touch and control the publishing trade as well other trades. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you."

Christian Work.

SABBATH SCHOOL WORK.

HOW TO SECURE THE ATTENTION OF THE CLASS.

BY A PRACTICAL TEACHER.

An address read before a Sabbath School Teachers' Association.



WITHOUT any preface, let us look, in the first place at the teacher. To enlarge on the needed qualifications for the office would perhaps be in keeping with the object in view, but we content ourselves with mention of one only—*love for children.*

FIRST QUALIFICATION.

This is indispensable, and therefore we specialise it in preference to all others. Without love we cannot teach in any true sense. And we must not only love the gentle, the attentive, the clever, but the rough, the careless, the stupid. Love that one because beneath that rugged coarse exterior there is an immortal soul, a gem which the King has commissioned us to find, cleanse, cut and polish for His crown. We must love the children for their souls' sake, for Christ's sake. Love

begets love and confidence. Coldness and harshness disappear in its presence. It puts new light into the teacher's eye, and sweetness into his voice. In its divine radiance sympathy is quickened, and the teacher gains complete control of the child. The character of our scholars is best studied in its light. The mind is a book to be studied. In the light of love, we can best become acquainted with the mental and moral character of our scholars, their personal and social peculiarities. By this knowledge we are the better able to adapt ourselves to them. The wisest teacher is he who seeks to combine the man's intellect and the child's heart, who continues to keep fresh in his memory the knowledge of what he once was, and what a child's wants, likes and dislikes, and infirmities, really are. If we would have children's attention, we must have their love and sympathy. To obtain this teachers must themselves exhibit loving sympathy towards them. Be for the time being one of themselves. To secure attention of children in class is well nigh impossible without mental sympathy. This qualification then the teacher must possess. Without it his efforts to instruct and secure attention will be vain. In short such a one had better not take the task in hand.

PREPARATORY TRAINING OF TEACHERS.

The next point to which we would call your attention is that of preparatory training for the office. In this direction nothing has hitherto been attempted by the church to which we belong. But we believe the Sunday School Teacher needs training for the work as much as the minister for his. It is to be hoped that the day is not far distant when in connection with every one of our churches there shall be a Normal Class for the special training of young men and women of the congregation who are possessed of the natural qualifications for the office of teacher or superintendent. The ministers that fill our pulpits ought as part of their professional training to be fitted to take charge of such classes. In our Church the chief attention is directed to mere pulpit ministrations. The Sabbath School has not had that attention bestowed on it which its importance demands. The germs of our future churches are in the Sunday School*. The churches of the future will without doubt be those that bestow most attention on this department of their work. The Catholic Church seems well aware of the value of this factor in its future, and exerts itself strenuously in all lands to control the education both secular

*We would be inclined rather to say that the family is the nursery of the church and the sabbath school secondary to the family as an instrument of religious training.—
EDITOR C.C.M.

and religious of its youth. It is not the duty of the Church to furnish secular education. But it is its duty to see that all the youth within its fold are well instructed not only in scriptural knowledge, but in the articles of our Church's special faith, its constitution and past history. Besides, some knowledge of general Church history and Christian evidences is necessary. The age in which we live is critical, scientific, progressive. In the keen conflicts of thought our youth should be capable of rendering a reason for the hope that is in them and the faith of their fathers. How can this be accomplished unless we have well-instructed and well-trained Sabbath School Teachers? We hail the Normal Class publication as a step in the right direction, and one much needed. In the almost, as yet, utter absence, of special preparatory training for the office, there is nothing for it, for S. S. Teachers but reading, thinking, teachers' associations, etc.

PREPARING EACH LESSON.

But we digress. To return. Something may be now said with advantage on the preparation of the weekly Sunday lessons. This is needed by the teacher for his class-work, no less than by the minister for his pulpit work. Ample time must be taken for it. We must read, re-read, memorize, think. We must begin early in the week, and have the lesson or some portion of it before the mind's eye every day during the week. We must study not only the lesson itself, but parallel texts. Compare Scripture with Scripture. Before consulting any commentary the best way is to think over and study the lesson for ourselves, closely, persistently, independently. Looking at God's Word without human interposition is the best way of getting at God's meaning. This power of independent thought God has given to all to some extent. Should we not culture and use it for His glory? It is a wonderful power. Who can explain the process? A sunbeam playing on a lump of ice gradually melts it. Crystal after crystal breaks from the solid mass. The beautiful dissection goes on till the lump of ice is a cup of cold water. So we may accustom ourselves to apply the mind to a subject till it yields and opens up before us. The study of books or periodicals bearing on the lesson should always be subordinate to independent investigation.

HOW IS THE LESSON TO BE TAUGHT?

Next we may consider briefly how the lesson should be taught. To know a lesson is one thing, but to impart it, quite another. The first

step in this direction is acquaintance with our scholars. We must seek as thorough a knowledge as possible of the soil on which we are to sow the seed. We must try and ascertain the manner in which this truth or that truth will strike their youthful minds, and the methods by which it may be fully unfolded, and deeply and lastingly impressed on their hearts. To reach this desirable goal, it is best to put ourselves in the position of our scholars, and put the lesson into that form which will be most likely to reach each one. In class we must not try to teach all that is in a lesson, but select one or two of the leading thoughts and teach them as thoroughly as possible. One truth well taught in its various phases, historic, doctrinal and practical, is worth ten truths superficially handled. Before appearing in class, we should select one or two of the leading practical thoughts, and view them in all their bearings. Then in class seek to fix them in the mind of the scholars by pertinent questioning, and well-chosen illustrations drawn from the world around us. This was Christ's plan: "Without a parable spake he not unto them." He hung truths concerning the Kingdom on almost every object in nature. So while flowers bloom and birds sing, while men sow and reap the teachings of the Great Master shall be repatched. He used many "likes" in his teachings; so should we.

QUESTIONING.

The question with which we started: "How to secure attention in class?" seems to rise up naturally here. This must be had else all qualifications and preparation are in vain. It is no easy matter to secure the attention of all the scholars of a class at the same time. We would say in regard to this: adopt no method of holding the attention that will divert the mind from the lesson to be studied. A funny story may hold eyes and ears spell-bound, but the memory of it may destroy all the influence of the teacher's instruction for the remainder of the lesson. A little incident, a curious question that is like a puzzle, a picture; these and a score of unmentioned methods may be adopted for arresting the attention and starting inquiry. During the entire recitation keep every scholar busy. Idleness is the curse of the class. If the teacher allows it, systematically, he may as well seek for the philosopher's stone as the attention of his scholars in class. Unflagging interest must be kept up during the whole time of class work. All must be kept at work. Love of activity is as natural to children as love of parents. The wise teacher has only to seize on this universal instinct in children, and direct it into the desired channels, to secure undivided attention. An excellent plan is to allow

every scholar the privilege of asking questions of the teacher respecting the lesson. It is also a good thing to ask occasionally the individual opinions of each one in the class on some points of the lesson. A commendable thing also is to ask for a story or anecdote illustrative of some point in the lesson on successive Sundays. Again, the teacher should insist on home preparation of lessons by the scholars. In class they should be encouraged to tell all they know about the lesson. The teacher must also study the art of questioning. Lord Bacon says, "a wise question is half the knowledge." It needs a good question to secure a good answer. Attention will soon flag in a class under a slow, weak and un-systematic style of questioning. Some questions are intended to find out what the scholar knows and needs, other questions quietly put knowledge into his head. Another kind of questions call back the kind of knowledge thus given. Regarding the art of questioning we would say: Put your questions in as few words as possible. Let the words be clear—transparent as crystal. Let them convey some meaning. But do not put the answer nor half the answer into any question. Ask your questions spiritedly as if you expected an answer to each one from every scholar. Never smile at a scholar's answer. Never chide him for stupidity. Never praise too much a good effort or answer. Be able to convince your scholars that you believe with all your heart all you teach. Be true to the children. Teach as in the sight of God. Never attempt to teach what you do not quite understand. Never tell a child what you could make him tell you. Never give a piece of information without asking for it again. Use no hard words when easy ones will convey your meaning. Unless you are quite sure a word has meaning to convey, never use it. Give no unnecessary commands. Give none you do not mean to be obeyed to the letter.

GENERAL PRECEPTS IN CLOSING.

Permit no child to remain in class for a minute without something to do and a motive for doing it. Be enthusiastic in the work of teaching. Teachers complain of the dullness, of the carelessness, and the lack of interest in the lesson on the part of the scholars. The fault lies generally at the teacher's own door. If the teacher would have enthusiastic scholars, he must himself set the example. The initiative faculty is strongly developed in children. We must be ourselves what we would have them to be. Partiality must be avoided. Favoritism will kill the influence of any teacher. All must be treated alike. In conclusion we would re-

commend that every scholar in the class should be made to feel as though the whole recitation—the honour of the class—belonged to him. Also we would recommend as a good plan to ask occasionally the opinions of the whole class on any given answer to a question. By this means children are trained to constant habits of criticism of each other's work and answers in class. Attention under such training soon becomes a habit. Should any pupil resist these influences we have named, the best thing the teacher can do is to fire at such a one all imaginable questions on the lesson, and always when least expected. This will make the position of idler or trifler disagreeable and hard in class. Few can resist this plan. We have seldom known it to fail. Lastly put Christ into the lesson—Christ the divine, Christ the incarnate, Christ the children's Saviour, forgiving and loving. These, Mr. Chairman, are the thoughts that have occurred to my mind on this important topic. I have not attempted close treatment of the subject. I have arrived at the practical. Trusting the remarks may be of some service, we beg to close.

Practical Papers.

A TALK WITH THE YOUNG FOLKS.

BY THE REV. D. WINTERS, PHILADELPHIA, U.S.A.

WHEN we are parting with our friends they generally, as they shake our hand, say to us, "Take care of yourself." This is good advice, and I will, at this time, take it as the subject of my talk to my young friends. I like to talk to the young people, because I was once as young as any of them, and I think I am young yet, and always mean to be young. Though my body shall grow old if I live long enough, I intend that my spirit shall always be young.

But now for my advice to you, young friends,—"*Take care of yourselves.*"

Take care of your *time*. Time is the warp of life, and we may weave into it threads of shoddy or of gold just as we please. Time is like a block of precious marble. We are sculptors who out of it must cut a statue. Every day we are doing something to it. By and by it will be

finished. If we fashion it properly it will make us glad with its smiles everlastingly ; if we spoil it, it will cast its dark and appalling shadow upon us forever.

Sometimes we see written over the doors of workshops in large letters these words, intended to keep idlers and loungers out: "No admittance except on business. *Time is money.*" Now I think it is a good thing, when we have work to do, to keep lazy people out of our way, that they may not waste our time. But I say, also, that *time is not money.* It is far more than money. You cannot buy it with money. Queen Elizabeth of England is said to have cried in terrible anguish, when lying upon her deathbed, "Millions of money for a moment of time." But she could not purchase it. Voltaire, a French infidel, told his physician, a short time before his death, that he would give him half of what he was worth if he would give him six months longer to live. "Sir," said the doctor, "you cannot live six weeks." "Then," said the dying infidel, "I shall go to hell and you shall go with me." Cotton Mather, an eminent clergyman, said one day when a man had taken up a great deal of his time, "I had rather have given that man a handful of money than have him waste my time thus." A very learned man in the United States, a few years ago, said to a number of gentlemen who waited upon him and offered him five hundred dollars an evening if he would deliver a course of scientific lectures in the city of New York: "Gentlemen, I can't waste my time in making money."

Young friends, God has placed us in this world to prepare for another world, and according to the manner in which we spend the few years allotted to us here, so will it fare with us forever. Every day, every hour, every moment of our time on the earth will exert an influence upon our eternity.

" 'Tis not for man to trifle, Life is brief
And sin is here.
An age is but the falling of a leaf,
A dropping tear.
We have no time to sport away the hours ;
All must be in earnest in a world like ours.

" Not *many* lives, but only *one*, have we—
Frail, fleeting man ;
How sacred should that one life ever be ;
—That narrow span !
Day after day filled up with blessed toil,
Hour after hour still bringing in new spoil."

Again, I say, *Take care of the habits you form.* By our habits we mean

our accustomed ways of doing things. Somebody has said that a man is just a bundle of habits; and this may be said of all boys and girls, as well as of men and women. We gather this bundle up when we are young. We put something into it every day. By and by it will be a very big bundle, and we shall have to carry it with us as long as we live, so you see we should be careful what we put into it. Some young people have *idle* habits. They sleep late in the morning. Their mothers can hardly get them out of bed, and when they get up they won't do anything. They remind us of what the farmer said of his horse. He said his horse had only two faults. One was that he was hard to catch, and the other, that he was not good for anything when he was caught. Some have *diligent* habits. They rise early in the morning, and they keep busy all day. Some young people have very *careless* habits. Others form very *careful* habits about everything they do. They have a place for everything, and they put everything in its own place. Some people have very *dilatory* habits. They never do anything in time. They seem to have been born a little too late, and they have always been behind time ever since. Other people have *prompt* habits. When they have anything to do they do it at once. Next to *economy* in the expenditure of our time; nothing is so important as care in the formation of our habits.

Now I must advise my young friends to take care about the *company you keep*. You know it is often said we are known by our company. This is very true. There is a little creature called the chameleon which always takes on the color of the ground, or pieces of wood, or leaves around it. We are all very much like the chameleon in some respects. One is that we are sure to become like the people whose company we take pleasure in. Or we are like a lake whose water is very clear. If you stand where you can look down upon it you will see reflected in it every change which takes place in the clouds above it. So do our lives reflect the lives of our companions. If you associate with people who are peevish, and cross, and contrary, and untruthful, and dishonest, and who use bad language, you will soon become just like them. If you keep company with persons who are gentle, and kind, and truthful, you will soon begin to be like them.

A gentleman once told his little daughter that she must not go with some other children, because they were naughty, and he did not think it was best for her to go with such persons. "Do you think, papa," said she, "I am so thoughtless that I cannot go with them without being injured by them?" Her papa then took a piece of a dead coal from the grate and

offered it to her. She did not wish to take it into her hand; but he urged her, saying, "It cannot burn you, my child." She took it into her hand, and when she laid it down, she found it had blackened not only her hand but also her white dress. "You see," said Susan, "one cannot be too careful about handling coals even when they are dead; for if they won't burn they may blacken." "Just so," said the father, "and we can never be too careful about the company we keep."

Perhaps you begin to think my talk has lasted about long enough, so I will stop with one more word of advice: *Take care of your aims in life.* God did not make us merely to eat, and drink, and sleep, and dress ourselves, and have what some people call a *good time* in this world. *He made us to work.* So you see everybody should have something to do, and that something should be worthy of the dignity of a creature made in the image of God. People may be divided into four classes, according to the way they spend God's time. The first class is composed of the *lazy people* who spend their time in doing nothing. The second class is made up of the *busy people* whose life is occupied with trifles. They never do anything useful. They are the triflers of society, or the busy idle people. Into the third class we will put the people who are busy all the time, but who busy themselves in *doing mischief*—in trying to do harm and to make the world worse than it is. In the fourth class are to be found all the people who are serving God, and who are trying to leave this world better when they go out of it than they found it when they came into it. These people have gotten the only proper aim in life.

But some of my young friends may, perhaps, say: Suppose one is a farmer, a tradesman, or a servant, or a merchant, or a magistrate, suppose one has some very busy occupation, how is he going to get time to serve God and to help make the world better? I will give you the Bible's answer to that question. Here it is: "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." We are to do everything for God, and, of course, it is as easy to do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus and for God as it is to do it for ourselves, or for the world, or for Satan.

But our chief aim in life should be to make sure that we have given our heart to Christ; that we believe on him in this life, so that we shall be sure to live with God and serve him in heaven forever. That is the mark at which we must aim, and if we miss it, it would have been better for us not to have lived at all. Better would it have been for us to have died the moment we were born than go through the world without faith in Jesus.

I told you, at the beginning of my talk, about Queen Elizabeth, who cried, on her death bed, "millions of money for a few moments of time." Most people would think she had not wasted her time. She could write in five different languages. It was said of her that she knew as much as any man of her time in all Europe. She ruled over a loyal and strong people who loved her. She had ten thousand beautiful dresses in her wardrobe, and yet she was very unhappy when she came to die, just because she had not glorified God in her life.

Young friends, we must go hence out of this world by and by. We shan't stay here very long, and we cannot go out the world with comfort and hope if we miss the one true aim of life, the one for which we were made—to *serve God*.

OUR DUTY TO GOD AND MAN IN OUR DAILY LABOURS.

READ MATT. XXV. 14-30.

From these verses and from others which might be drawn under your attention, but which will no doubt readily occur to your minds, bearing on the subject of *Our duty to God and man in our daily labours*, I think it must be obvious to all that there is a dignity, as well as a responsibility, in all grades of honest toil, whether it be that of the head or the hand, or a combination of both. That God has bestowed on all responsible creatures at least *one* talent all will readily admit, and on the use we make of such gift or gifts, which the bountiful Creator has bestowed on us, will our happiness and usefulness on earth depend, and the probability of an abundant entrance being administered to us into the mansions above.

Let us consider the examples of activity and labour set before us by our Creator and Redeemer; and it surely must be an incentive and encouragement to us to walk in any path of duty which God has *personally* honoured, both by precept and example. In the first book, and in the opening verses of sacred history, we are told that God "rested on the seventh day from all his work," thus reminding us of the rest elsewhere spoken of in Holy Writ, "that remaineth for the people of God," who nobly and faithfully fulfil their mission here; and in the opening chapters of New Testament History, God manifest in the flesh, our Saviour and Redeemer, is found honouring the homes of industry by his birth, child-

hood, and early training, by the selection He made of His followers and disciples from amidst the humble walks of life, and by his own examples of labour and obedience, for we have no doubt (being subject to his parents, at least during his earlier manhood) He was called upon occasionally to assist his father, Joseph, in the honourable calling of a carpenter.

There seems to be a universal law that man must work, and his happiness very much consists in his faculties being employed to some good purpose. The adaptations of our whole being declare this—the heart and brain to think and direct, the hands to grasp and carve with cunning art the appliances which the thought and ingenuity of the inventive faculties of the mind dictate, the feet to travel, and extend to other people and distant lands the blessings of our own. All these gifts must be accounted for, all these talents should be put to use, enlisted in the service of God, and used for the good of our fellow-men.

There is a noble dignity in work, whether it be in the pulpit or on the platform, whether in scientific pursuits or in following the plough, or in any of the many honourable callings and professions which our advanced civilization renders necessary, and even

“The hardy son’s of honest toil,”

are well worthy of all praise and encouragement.

Labour ennobles the mind, invigorates the body, satisfies the conscience, and tends to develop what is true and noble, and generous, and kind, in man. Labour and poverty are, alas! too often combined, but there is a noble dignity in the horny hand, there is still a manly bearing in the honest day-labourer or mechanic who, though it is sometimes hard to make both ends meet, yet is able to manage it with economy and the exercise of self-denial, and therefore “can look the whole world in the face, for he owes not any man.”

Show me the man of true and honest heart
Who, for the sake of gain, will not depart
From paths of rectitude, and then I can
Show you God’s noblest work—“An honest man.”

Temptation’s darts do not disturb his mind,
True to himself, he’s true to all mankind;
By honest toil he earns what’e’r he can,
And proves himself to be—“An honest man.”

A celebrated poet has said that “*An honest man’s the noblest work of God,*” and he who worthily fills the station in which Providence has placed him—

“Acts nobly, acts wisely, angels could no more.”

God is just, as well as merciful, and if we would partake of His favours and mercy, we must also comply with His demands or suffer the penalty which our sloth or neglect deserves. God never intended that the man to whom he gave *ten* talents should only use *five*, and that the person to whom *one* was given should bury that one in the earth; but in His Word He has plainly set forth that according to our privileges of mental and physical capacity, education and social position, He will expect us to give an account of our stewardship, and be able to show both to Him and our fellow-men that we are putting those talents to usury with which he has entrusted us.

In business circles, and in the markets of the world, gold is the standard of currency and exchange, and what eagerness and anxiety do men evince who sink their wealth in stocks, and bonds, and mortgages, that they may reap the utmost cent of profit or interest; and should we be less anxious or concerned in regard to using and cultivating these mental, moral, and physical powers with which our Creator has blessed us, or neglect to carry them (in the light of reason and revelation) to the best and most profitable markets we can find, and there display them to the honour and glory of Him who gave them. No, verily! Talents may be considered the currency of heaven, and the law of interest and compound interest applies as truly to the use and development of these, as to the careful investment of dollars and cents. If we have but *one* talent we need not stop there, for if we use that aright it will develop others of which we were never considered capable, and these again will be fruitful and multiply just as surely as the seed carefully planted and cultivated will produce others of a like nature and kind. This means self-denial and work; but it is better to wear than rust; for as rust eateth into the unused plough, and renders it useless for cultivation, so surely will ignorance and indolence render us unfit to emulate talent and worth. We cannot all work in the same field, but the fields are many, and the world is wide, and from the numerous fields we have noble examples set before us of what others have achieved.—

“Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints in the sands of time.”

To make our life a success we must begin with fixed principles—a high moral tone—a thorough understanding of the difference between right and wrong, so that we may have decision under temptation to say

“No!” and courage to say “Yes!” when God plainly points us to a field of usefulness in any corner of His vineyard. We may meet with disappointment, but let that only mettle us for greater effort; we may meet with uncharitable criticism and sarcasm from those who are too lazy to exert themselves, or too stupid to notice the talents which they themselves possess; but let that only make us the more careful that we give no offence worthy of such criticism or sarcasm; let our aim be “the glory of God and the world’s advancement,” and we need not fear what man can do unto us. Honour and ease seldom go together, and honour got too easy is seldom valued aright. We can understand the honest pride which the veteran has in his medals and badges of honour when he thinks of the weary marches and counter-marches which he has passed through, the cold, hunger, and exposure which he has endured, the horrors of the trenches, and the valorous attack and turning of the enemy in the day of battle; we can understand the lightheartedness of the sailor on nearing his native village after a long and perilous voyage—or the sweetness of rest after a day’s labour and toil; then let us work and think of our rest, rather than rest and think of our work, and let us employ the talents which God has given us, and they will richly reward us, both in this life and in that which is to come.

In this good cause let us united be,
If we would prosper. Therefore let us see
That all our energies be so combined
As best to cultivate the heart and mind.
This occupation is the best that can
Engage the youth or occupy the man
In leisure hours; which, be they rightly spent,
Are of great moment, and by Heaven sent
To sweeten toil, and relaxation give
To dull and cankering cares which, while we live,
Must be our lot; our time then let us spend
As best becomes us, knowing not our end.—J. IMRIE.

Christian Miscellany.

SINS OF INFIRMITY.

“ Christian Life is full of paradoxes. We are always willing, purposing, desiring, yearning ; we are always failing, and coming short of our aspirations and aims. And this is so not because of any subduing dominion of indwelling sin to which we willingly submit ourselves, but because while the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak. . . . For a season faults have been held in check, and the better self comes to the front. We have recognized the will of God in a time of affliction. All this passes away as morning dew when the heat cometh. Our lighter thoughts fritter away our humiliation. Lofty and self-trusting impulses belie our acts of lowliness. We become restless, self-guiding, and wilful again. How evil thoughts, indulged without let or hindrance in the years past, return ! How unholy desires, the imagination and pictures of a polluted mind, come, are borne in upon us as it were invisibly, on the wind ! How a passion or temper that seemed dormant is excited and aroused, and we feel as if all the strife had to be fought over again ! Are there not also the refinements of sin ? Weariness in well-doing ; so much of self mingled with what seems to be all for God ; secondary aims lying just below the horizon of visible acts ; a seeking after applause of prominence, or a reputation for piety under the thin guise of seeking our Master’s glory ? What shall we say of envyings, heart-burnings, petty-jealousies, and a spirit of detraction ? What shall we say of uncharitableness ? Are not so called religious people and religious papers often the least charitable and the most censorious ? What shall we say of hankerings after the past, and that looking back which speaks of a perilous clinging to it ? What shall we say of those dark seasons of spiritual doubt, misgivings, fears, and faithlessness, on their part, who, often having had experience of the Lord’s loving kindness and having never found Him fail, when faith is tried and clouds obscure the brightness say, ‘ Hath God forgotten to be gracious, and will He shut up His loving kindness in displeasure ? ’ Are not these of the sins of infirmity ? Will not the experience of each one, according to his or her individual disposition and character, add to this list.”—*Mr. Figue’s “ Mission ” Addresses.*

SINGING IN THE FAMILY.

Cultivate singing in the family. Begin when the child is not three years old. The songs and hymns your mother sang, bring them all back to your memory, and teach them to your little ones; mix them all together, to meet the similar moods, as in after life they come over us so mysteriously sometimes. Many a time and oft, in the very whirl of business; in the sunshine and gayety of the streets, and amid the splendor of the drives in the park, some little thing wakes up the memories of early youth—the old mill; the cool spring; the shady tree by the school-house—and the next instant we almost see the ruddy cheeks, the smiling faces, and the merry eyes of schoolmates, some gray-headed now, most “lie mouldering in the grave.” And “the song your mother sang” springs unbidden to the lips, and soothes and sweetens all these memories.

“WHAT ALTHOUGH?”

“What a strange title!” I fancy I hear some of you say, as you read the words “What although?” Yes, it is a strange title. But I think you will be interested in it when I tell you that these two simple words were lately spoken by a little boy, and that they did real good.

One evening in this little boy’s home there was as usual, just before bedtime, a considerable time spent in singing hymns. An aunt was calling, who did not fail to join in the praise, so they had an uncommonly hearty service of song. When it was over the little folks were sent off for the night, and by-and-by the visitor left. Now, it had been the mother’s habit, after singing with her children, to pray with them, but this night she had not even proposed that they should kneel together, and our little friend was puzzled to know why. So when his aunt had gone, and he had an opportunity of speaking to his mother, he said to her very gently, “Mother, why didn’t you pray to-night?” “Oh,” she said, “you know your aunt was in.” “Well, mother,” said he with great simplicity and evident surprise, “*What although?*”

He did not mean to hurt her feelings, but I can tell you these two words almost made her weep. She could not help thinking, “I have been of little faith: I have been ashamed of Jesus.” Even when she was telling me what her boy said, I saw she could scarcely keep back her tears, and I was not in the least astonished that she felt the words so

much. They came home to me too. I knew I needed them, for I was disposed, while owning that I ought to serve Jesus openly and fearlessly, to say to myself, "Oh, I am very unfit, and there are many obstacles in the way, and people may laugh at me." And the little voice seemed to whisper, "What although? what although? what although?" and I could not answer the little voice, save with tears for my past faithlessness.

Maybe, boys and girls, some of you need to hearken to this little brother's voice, "What although?"

Here is a girl who says, "I would like to serve Jesus, but I am just a girl, and I am not clever, and I might make mistakes." . . . "What although?"

And here is a boy. God has spoken to him as He did to Samuel of old, but he is afraid to do God's bidding. He says to himself, "Others don't always do it. I shall be singular. They will make a fool of me." . . . "What although?"

MATERIALS FOR THOUGHT.

FREEDOM of religion is not freedom from religion, as many seem to suppose.

WHAT is merely matter of prayer on earth will be entirely matter of praise in heaven.

PREACH the best to small assemblies. Jesus preached to one woman at the well, and got all Samaria out to hear him the next time.

THE true Christian is ever ready to receive on him the blow aimed at the cause of Christ.

It is a higher exhibition of Christian manliness to be able to bear trouble than to get rid of it.

CONSIDER what heavy responsibility lies upon you in your youth, to determine, among realities, by what you will be delighted, and among imaginations, by whose you will be led.

MEN want more than a bare knowledge of the facts of religion. A man may utter the whole truth, and be as cold as an icicle. It is the teaching out of the heart's anxiety for them that moves men.

LOVE is the regnant attribute of the divine nature; I do not find any other so expressed in Scripture. We do not find it said, God is mercy, God is justice, God is wisdom. No; the expression of this attribute has something peculiar in it—'God is love.'—*Ebenezer Erskine.*

THERE is nothing so effectual to obtain grace, to retain grace, and to regain grace, as always to be found before God, not overwise, but to fear;

and happy art thou if the heart be replenished with three fears—a fear for grace received, a greater fear for grace lost, and greatest fear to recover grace.

“If a pilot undertake to carry thee to the Indies, thou canst trust his conduct without knowing either the ship or how to govern it, or the way or the place to which thou art conveyed. And must not thy God and Saviour be trusted to bring thee safe to heaven unless He will satisfy all thy inquiries? How clearly does reason command me to trust Him, absolutely to trust Him, and to distrust myself! He is essential, infinite perfection, wisdom, power, and love. There is nothing to be trusted in any creature, but God working in it, or by it. I am altogether His own, by light, by devotion, by consent. He is the giver of all good to every creature as freely as the sun gives its light, and shall we not trust the sun to shine? He is my father, and has taken me into His family, and shall I not trust my heavenly father? He has given me His Son as the greatest pledge of His love, and shall He not with Him also freely give me all things? His Son purposely came to reveal His Father’s unspeakable love, and shall I not trust Him who has proclaimed His love by such a messenger from heaven?”

Children’s Treasury.

HOW TO PRAY

To say my prayer, is not to pray
Unless I mean the words I say:
Unless I think to whom I speak,
And with my heart His favor seek.

In prayer we speak to God above,
We seek the blessed Saviour’s love;
We ask for pardon for our sin,
And grace to keep us pure within.

But oh! if I am found to smile,
Or pray or look about a while,
Or think vain thoughts, the Lord will see,
And how can he be pleased with me?

Then let me, when I come to pray,
Not only mind the words I say,
But also strive with earnest care,
To let my heart go with my prayer.

THE DIFFERENCE.

"Willie, why were you gone so long for water?" asked the teacher of a little boy.

"We spilled it, and had to go back and fill the bucket again," was the prompt reply; but the bright, noble face was a shade less bright, less noble than usual, and the eyes dropped beneath the teacher's gaze, as if there was something that he wished to conceal.

The teacher crossed the room and stood by another, who had been Willie's companion.

"Freddy, were you not gone for the water longer than was necessary?"

For an instant Freddie's eyes were fixed on the floor, and his face wore a troubled look. But it was only for an instant—he looked frankly up to his teacher's face.

"Yes, ma'am," he bravely answered; "we met little Harry Braden and stopped to play with him, and then we spilled the water and had to go back."

Little friends, what was the difference between these two boys? Neither of them told anything that was not strictly true. Which one of them do you think the teacher trusted more fully after that? And which was the happier of the two?—*The Little Christian.*

MELT THEM.

A boy was trying to make a plummet out of some shot. He hammered them flat, laid them one upon another, and then hammered them with all his might, to make them adhere and unite in a solid mass. It was all in vain; they grew thinner, and smoother, and more polished, but would not unite, notwithstanding all his hammering.

"My son said his father, 'you had better melt them.'"

No sooner said than done. In they went into the melting ladle, and the fire soon took off the sharp edges, burned out the dross, and turned the whole into one refined and united mass.

Is not this the surest way to Christian union? Have we not had about enough of beating and banging, hammering and striking? Have not men been trying long enough to weld cold iron, consolidate cold lead, and unite cold Christians? "Melt them," and keep them melted, and then, instead of your toiling to bring Christians together you will find the devil will begin to take active measures to keep them apart. He will stir

them up on differences of faith—for you know he is very orthodox in faith, he “believes and trembles”—he will agitate them on forms, for he is familiar with that subject; he will excite them to contend about hope, and quarrel over things which they do not understand; but he will try to keep them free from love, which is greater than either faith or hope can be

Do not be ensnared by his devices.

Do not be content to be a religious gong, a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal, but seek the mighty melting power of grace divine, which comes from Jesus Christ, joins men’s hearts and hands in loving labor, and which unites Christians to each other, because they are made one in Him, their Lord and king and head.

Book Review.

PASTORAL THEOLOGY—THE PASTOR IN THE VARIOUS DUTIES OF HIS OFFICE; By Thos. Murphy, D.D., Pastor of the Frankford Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia. Andrew Kennedy, London; James Bain & Son, Toronto, 1877.

We have here a new book on a very old subject. The oldest Christian treatise on pastoral theology in the world, and no doubt the best, is Paul’s pastoral epistles to Timothy and Titus. The essence of the subject is handled by Paul in his usual exhaustive style, but as the ages move on, new applications of Paul’s first principles are required, and hence such books as the present are needed, and should be welcomed by ministers of the gospel.

A treatise on pastoral theology is, in its sphere, not unlike a treatise on the practice of medicine, in the sphere of the healing art. One of the first qualifications required in treatises of that kind is, that the writer should have long and large experience in the practice of the art on which he writes. This condition is amply fulfilled in the case of Dr. Murphy, as he tells us in his preface:—

“My own experience as pastor for more than a quarter of a century of a large and growing church, has brought me into personal and frequently repeated and anxious contact with nearly every practical question that can ordinarily arise in the ministerial work.”

Turning to the statistical tables of the Frankland Presbyterian

Church, as given in the minutes of the General Assembly, U. S. A., for 1877, we find it is the largest congregation but one in its Presbytery, having on its roll 516 communicants. We find also that thirteen new communicants were added during the year, and fifteen infants baptized, while the congregation contributes to every Church scheme save one, and has moreover a Sabbath School of 498 scholars. On the principle of the proverb, "Physician heal thyself," we are warranted to receive with respectful attention what an able and experienced pastor with such a record has to say to us on the practical work of the ministry.

But Dr. Murphy is furnished for his work with more than his own experience. He tells that when preparing for the ministry, he enjoyed the very great privilege of listening to lectures and familiar conversations on the character, duties, and responsibilities of the pastoral office, by the Rev. Dr. Archibald Alexander. When listening to these lectures he took copious notes, with which he now enriches the pages of his treatise.

Having devoted a chapter to "The Nature and Importance of Pastoral Theology," Dr. Murphy discusses with clearness, copiousness, and evangelical ardour, truly refreshing, the following subjects, each under a chapter:—"THE PASTOR—IN HIS CLOSET—IN THE STUDY—IN THE PULPIT—IN HIS PERSONAL PAROCHIAL WORK—IN THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CHURCH, (such as elder's work, woman's work, prayer-meetings)—IN THE PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH, (this treats of revivals, meetings with inquirers, care for converts)—IN THE SABBATH SCHOOL—IN THE BENEVOLENT WORK OF THE CHURCH—IN THE SESSION—IN THE HIGHER COURTS OF THE CHURCH—IN HIS RELATION TO OTHER DENOMINATIONS."

We could wish space were at our disposal this month to give some extracts which we are sure would delight our readers, not only for their matter, but for the fact that such a book is likely to pass into the hands of the young ministers of the American churches of all denominations. On the assumption made by the sainted McCheyne, that "one word to a minister is worth sometimes a word to two or three thousand souls," one cannot calculate the good this book may effect. Reader, do you feel special interest in any young man who is about to enter the work of the ministry, or who is already in that work groping out solutions for himself in pastoral theology, then we know of no greater boon (a boon that might color a life-long ministry,) you could confer on that young pastor than with a kind note and many prayers, to make him a present of this timeous volume by Dr. Murphy, not less beautiful in its typographical finish, than weighty and impressive in its message to pastors.