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Monthly Messenger.

Edited by Rev. T. HALL, Congregational Minister, Queen's Road Chapel, St. John's.

NEW SERIES. VOL. III. No. 12.

DECEMBER, 1876.

PRICE FIVE CENTS.

TO THE FRIENDS OF THE "MONTHLY MESSENGER."

Our little magazine has been scattered broadcast round our shores for the past three years. With fear and trembling we undertook the work at first. There are difficulties to encounter in such an enterprise in Newfoundland that are not met with in other countries. The editor represents but a small section of the Christian public of the colony, and therefore did not expect much denominational support. Yet we are thankful to record increasing success. Through the kindness of a few friends, some of whom are numbered among our own congregation, others members of different churches, we have been able this year to meet the publisher's demands, and circulate gratuitously a large number of the monthly parts.

We tender our warmest thanks to those friends, and would like much to mention their honoured names here, but that we know they prefer secrecy to publicity in this matter. During the year we have received cheering testimony, both written and oral, to the useful character of this periodical. To be useful is our only aim. We conceived that such a work was needed, and trusting in the guidance and bounty of our heavenly Father, undertook it. We lay no claim to literary ability, and do not profess to write for the critical and fastidious, but for plain, humble Christians who are desirous to know their duty and how to do it, and for those who are anxious to find the way of life, that they may walk therein. Our pages have not been rendered unpleasant by the introduction of controverted topics or personal allusions. Our readers are in communion with every denomination of Christians in the city, and while we fearlessly contend for the truth and our common salvation, there has been no necessity for any invidious distinctions.

It is our intention to pursue the same course in future. We earnestly ask the co-operation of our readers to enable us to increase the subscription list. This is rendered the more necessary from the fact that the cost of publication has been considerably increased, while we charge the same to subscribers. Will our friends help us to double our list of subscribers in 1877? Each number will contain a portrait and sermon of some evangelical clergyman, various selections for the head and heart and life, hints for the home, the school, the church, and, above all, articles designed to lead the sinner to the only refuge, and to immediate flight to that place of eternal safety.

Besides, we will gladly note local events that may be deemed of sufficient importance, and cordially invite correspondence on this head. We are still deeply indebted to Mr. L. T. Chancey for his efficient management of the financial part, and to him we refer all communications on business.

THE END OF THE YEAR.

Eighteen hundred and seventy-six is numbered with the past. Henceforth its events belong to history. Its joys and sorrows, hopes and fears, will return no more. Its opportunities of improvement and usefulness are gone. We have stamped upon it our own image. What we have written, we have written, and *that* we shall read again by the light of the great white throne. It has been to many a year of memorable sorrow. The angel of death has spread his wings over the joyous home, and borne away in triumph the darling of their souls—the grave has closed over faces once bright with hope, and radiant with smiles.

Sorrows, too, like gloomy clouds, have gathered over hearts, while there have been fears in the way, portending evils to come. But to all it has been a year of grace. "His mercies are new every morning." Every breeze has been laden with goodness. My soul, forget not His lovingkindness. We have had trials, temptations, sorrows, evils, cares, but how many more have our sins provoked! What favour have we merited at His hands? Yet our joys and pleasures far outnumber our sorrows and sufferings. Come, then, and let us praise the Lord. Let us exalt His name together.

Christians more frequently neglect to praise the Giver of their mercies than we imagine. Nay, more, they are often ready to repine if a wise Providence appears to disappoint their hopes. We receive good at the hands of the Lord, shall we not receive evil? Shame on us, that we are chargeable with the sin of ingratitude, upon whom Heaven has lavished its most precious treasures. God's wisdom, power, and love, have combined to make us happy, and ensure our eternal blessedness. How can we be ungrateful, or murmur at the small inconveniences of our earthly pilgrimage. Be joyful in the Lord. "These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." A gloomy, disconsolate Christian is a lie, a contradiction, a stumbling-block. The heirs of grace and glory must be happy. Zion's travellers sing and rejoice as they homeward go. Consider our great example, "Who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Many Christians appear to be unhappy. It is easy to know the reason. They are not working for God. It would be strange, indeed, if they were happy, while living in open disobedience. The soul is out of harmony with God. There must be unrest, discomfort, pain. All must be working who would be happy or safe. Go, despairing souls, and employ the talent or talents committed to you, to His glory, and soon you will be bright and joyful. There is a work for each, and no one else can do that work if it is not done by

the person to whom God has assigned it. It will remain undone.

“Forward be our watchword,
Steps and voices joined,
Seek the things before us,
Not a look behind :
Burns the fiery pillar
At our army's head ;
Who shall dream of shrinking,
By our captain led !
Forward through the desert,
Through the toil and fight ;
Canaan lies before us,
Zion beams with light.”

DO YOU EVER THINK ?

What a silly question, you say. Surely I think. All men think. But do you ever think about the eternal future? You must shortly leave this world. Do you ever think of where you will spend eternity? The end of the year is a proper time for you to be reminded of the end of your earthly existence, and to be urged to make the necessary preparations for another state. Are you thinking of these things? I know there are many temptations to defer to some convenient season all serious attention to soul concerns. But is it wise to yield to the tempter? Are you sure of to-morrow? If you were—and of ten thousand to-morrows, is it right for you to give the world the chief place in your affections, to sin against a loving God, to neglect the great salvation? But you are not sure of an hour. “You may die before the needful work is done.” Therefore be persuaded to think and consider your ways, repent of thy sins and be reconciled to God. You have been solemnly warned this year; by the voice of heaven's ambassador, by the volume of inspired truth, by the monitions of conscience, by the bed of sickness, and the approach of death, by the opening grave, and by the Spirit of God. Will all these warnings produce no saving effect? God forbid. There stands the loving Saviour, His arms are open to receive you. The door of mercy is open; enter while you may; it may be shut with the closing year. The gates of the city of refuge stand wide open, and the avenger is on your track. Haste to the only place of safety.

“Come in this moment at his call.
And live for Him who died for all.”

Yield not any longer to the temptation to delay. You will never be better prepared to come to Christ than you are now. It will never be easier, and He will never be more willing to receive you.

Settle the great concern of your eternal destiny. At once come aside from the noise and show, and folly of the world, and deliberately, solemnly, unconditionally, surrender yourself to the Almighty Jehovah. May the end of the year witness the end of your rebellion, and sin, and unbelief!

THE CITY OF REFUGE.

(Written for the NEWFOUNDLAND MONTHLY
MESSENGER.)

Fly! Fly! the avenger is fast on your track,
Gird up your loose robes, and stay not to look back;
Cast aside every hindrance, leave all that is dear,
Press on till the gates of the city you near.

Haste! Haste! 'tis for life! Speed on to the goal,
Let the agony rending your innermost soul
Be as spurs to your sides, and as wings to your feet,
For death will o'ertake should your steps not be fleet.

Six cities of refuge around you all stand,
Each built on a hill, and so placed in the land,
That half a day's journey will take you right in
To the heart of the city you are striving to win.

For many miles round may each city be seen,
Miss it you cannot, for nothing can screen;
Its exalted position attracts every eye,
So that none vainly seeking may lie down to die.

The roads are quite straight, and no hindrance is
found;

No rocks, stones, or roughness, or uneven ground;
Here and there in their length huge stone pillars are
placed,

On which in large characters REFUGE is traced.

You may read as you run, nor pause for a look,
And should any river or swift-flowing brook
Cross your path, you will find that 'tis safely bridged
o'er,

That your time be not hindered in fording to shore.

Its gates stand wide open all day and all night,
And strangers are safe as an Israelite;

Its people bring food to the refugee's hand,
And provide him with all—'tis the law of the land.

See! See! He is off with the speed of a hind,
Which scents the fierce dogs on the soft-breathing
wind;

His eyes full of terror, his breath coming fast,
Can he mount the green hill? Will his strength it
outlast?

Oh! see how the bead-drops roll down his pale face!
How he strains every nerve to increase his swift pace!
He knows the avenger is close on his track,
Though he hears not his steps, and he dares not look
back.

He staggers! he stumbles! his enemy gains!
But he darts on again all regardless of pains.
He has touched the white walls with their refuge
engraved;

He has passed the gate's portals; oh, joy! he is saved!

Oh, sinner! believe there's a refuge for you;
It is found in Christ Jesus, the loving and true;
Cast aside every hindrance, count all things but dross,
And fly! quickly fly! to the foot of His cross.

The way is quite open, and all things made plain;
You have nothing to lose, and all things to gain;
With your guide-post—the Bible—you can't miss the
track.

Press on! ere death's dart strike and hold you quite
back.

Oh, pause not! oh, die not in sight of the goal!
Let repentance and faith be as wings to your soul;
Let your breathings be prayer for forgiveness and trust,
For outside of God's refuge quite perish you must.

The arms of the Saviour are e'er opened wide;
He entreats you to come and find peace at His side.
His wound-marks proclaim Him a refuge engraved.
Go, fly to his bosom! In Him you are saved.

H. D. ISACKE.

GOD EVERYWHERE.

IF I wake in the night I am still with Him. I have liberty to pour out my awed thoughts to Him in still and fearless reverence, and my gentle thoughts in confidential love, and my troubled thoughts in prayer, and my glad some thoughts in the songs of the Spirit. If I wish it, when I travel, I travel in Divine society; when I walk in the midst of trouble, He revives me; when I droop in the valley of the shadow of death, He comforts me; when I am engaged in no defined acts of devotion—when not a voice is whispered nor a look reflected—“Tender thoughts within me burn, to feel a Friend is nigh.” When I go out into the solitudes of nature I feel around me thinking, silent life, and “all the air is love.” “Surely God is in this place.” I hear His voice in the song of the winds and in the chime of the waters. The earth rocks to His tread in the tempest; at His smile “the wilderness breaks forth into singing.” When I return to my home, He who made “the desert rejoice,” makes “the solitary place glad.” I can find Him anywhere, at all times, and find Him as my Friend. In the workshop, in the loft, all hung with cobwebs, behind the screen of the shaded lane, I can find a “holy of holies”; and solitude of spirit, where I can find no solitude of place, is often to me “none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven.”—*C. Stanford.*

THE TABLE.

After meat half-hour take rest,
Thus the better twill digest,
Spend the time in lively chat,
Welcome business after that.

WHERE is excellent wisdom in this homely rhyme. Why? Because when food has been taken, the stomach is immediately set to work to get it changed into that state in which it may be received through the blood into the system of the body. To do this well the stomach needs and draws upon the brain for a supply of nervous force. Any part of the body—a hand, an arm, a foot—on being put to work requires this nervous force. The brain itself needs it for its own uses. Now, when the brain or the limbs are actively engaged in using this precious nervous force for themselves, there may be too little left for the stomach, which therefore cannot do its work as it ought. This is the reason why, after a full meal, a period of rest is wholesome. It assists digestion, and without digestion there is little chance for health or happiness.

A HINT FOR TEACHERS.

A SUNDAY-SCHOOL teacher tells this little story about how a restless boy was won and controlled:—

One of the teachers in our Sunday-school who made it a rule to adhere strictly to the lesson, and pay no attention to outside remarks made by his scholars, had in his class a boy who became perfectly ungovernable. He declined to instruct him, and the superintendent brought him to me, with the remark that no one else would have him. I showed him to a seat, and his first act was to pinch the boys on each side of him. After correcting him, I picked up my Bible to read over the lesson, when he said, with a most forlorn look, “You ain’t going to read, be you? I don’t want you to.” “What shall I do, Johnny?” I said. “I don’t believe you’ll do it.” “What is it?” I asked. “I just want you to put them books and papers under the table, and tell us something scary.” I place them under the table, as requested, and told them the story of “Daniel in the lions’ den,” and never was I rewarded by a more attentive listener. When I had finished, he said, “You know any more like that?” I said, “Come again, and see,” and he did come, and has continued to come regularly, and is as obedient as anyone could wish. I truly believe if I had not followed his request all influence over him would have been lost.

A good many teachers, both in the class and in the pulpit, might profitably “put the books and papers under the table,” and say something fresh and interesting, if they can, by way of winning the attention and hearts of these hoy teach.—*Sunday-school Paper.*

PASSIONS THAT INDUCE DISEASE.

THE passions which act most severely on the physical life are anger, fear, hatred, and grief. The other passions are comparatively innocuous. What is called the passion of love is not injurious until it lapses into grief and anxiety; on the contrary, it sustains the physical power. What is called ambition is of itself harmless; for ambition, when it exists purely, is a nobility, lifting its owner entirely from himself into the exalted service of mankind. It injures when it is debased by its meaner ally, pride; or when stimulating a man to too strenuous efforts after some great object, it lends him to the performance of excessive mental or physical labour, and to the consequences that follow such efforts.

The passion called avarice, according to my experience, tends rather to the preservation of the body than to its deterioration. The avaricious man, who seems to the luxurious world to be debarring himself of all the pleasures of the world, and even to be exposing himself to the fangs of poverty, is generally placing himself in the precise conditions favourable to a long and healthy existence. By his economy he is saving himself from all the worry incident to penury; by his caution he is screening himself from all the risks incident to speculation, or the attempt to amass wealth by hazardous means; by his regularity of hours and perfect appropriation of the sunlight, in preference to artificial illumination, he rests and works in periods that precisely accord with periodicity of nature; by his abstemiousness in living he takes just enough to live, which is precisely the right thing to do according to the rigid natural law. Thus, in almost every particular, he goes on his way freer than other men from the external causes of all the induced diseases, and better protected than most men from the worst consequences of those diseases which spring from causes that are uncontrollable.

TWO STRINGS.

AN honest peasant surprised an infidel one day, who was jeering at him for believing the Bible, by the reply, “We country people like to have two strings to our bow.” “What do you mean?” inquired the infidel. “Only this,” rejoined the poor man, “that believing the Bible, and acting up to it, is like having two strings to one’s bow; for, if it is not true, I shall be a better man for living according to it, and so it will be for my good in this life; that is one string to my bow. And, if it should be true, it will be better for me in the next life; that is another string, and a pretty strong one it is. But, sir, if you do not believe the Bible, and, on that account, do not live as it requires, you have not one string to your bow. And oh, sir, if its tremendous threatenings prove true—oh, think what then will become of you!”—*Selected.*

THE SIMPLICITY OF THE BIBLE.

THE Bible is a deep book, when depth is required—that is to say, for deep people. But it is not intended particularly for profound persons; on the contrary, much more for shallow and simple persons. And therefore the first, and generally the main and leading idea of the Bible, is on its surface, written in plainest possible (Greek, Hebrew, or English, needing no penetration or amplification, needing nothing but what we might all give—attention. But this, which is in everyone’s power, and is the only thing that God wants, is just the last thing anyone will give him. We are delighted to ramble away into day-dreams—to repeat pet verses from other places, suggested by chance words—to snap at an expression which suits our particular views. But the plain, intended, immediate, fruitful meaning, which everyone ought to find always, and especially that which depends on our seeing the relation of the verse to those near it, and getting the force of the whole passage in due relation—this sort of significance we do not look for; it being truly not to be discovered, unless we really attend to what is said, instead of to our own feelings.—*John Ruskin.*

UNGOVERNED TEMPERS.

IT seems sometimes when we read the weekly list of crime, as though the devil had received a new licence to walk to and fro over the earth. It makes the thoughtful heart intensely sad to hear of deeds of blood, committed now by old men, and again by mere children, lads with the smooth, unshaved lip of early youth. What is the world coming to, we sigh; and still we hug to ourselves the pleasant illusion that none of this darkness and desolation can ever touch our own sheltered circles. Our homes are safe. Our darlings will never stain hands or hearts with sins so vile as those the papers tell of, and the dear one who said his prayers last night at our lap will never wear the brand of CAIN.

Well, we will trust in God that we are safe. God has promised to be a defence about the habitations of His people. But He has given us our share to do, as parents, as citizens, as Church members, and as parts of society. Our children must be taught self-control. We must practise it in their presence. We must hold in check the hasty word, the unbridled gesture, and the craving appetite. As early as may be, we must let the boys and girls begin to feel a responsibility for themselves. The government which fails to train a human being so that he can to some extent engineer his own soul, is not parental but despotic government. "Down brakes!" yourself when you are going too fast, and let all about you see that you have yourself in hand. Example, steady and consistent, will help more powerfully than precept in the training of the young.

SYSTEMATIC EFFORT.

PRESIDENT FINNEY once said: "I believe the connection between the right use of means to save sinners and the accomplishment of that important end is as sure as between the right use of the means to raise grain and the certainty of harvest. I have seldom seen failure when a church has used the means for promoting a revival in earnest; but I have often seen success under circumstances the most forbidding conceivable."

If any feel disposed to doubt the truth of this, we think the results of the past year must set such doubt at rest. Every earnest effort has invariably been crowned with success, and thousands to-day, all over Christendom, are rejoicing in the peace and grace of the Gospel because the Church utilised aright the right means for their salvation. The earnest, simple, primitive effort, loving faith and zeal from a loving heart going out zealously after the souls of men, brought down the Pentecostal blessing. System and method tell, even in Christian work. Order is God's first law; and the Church is at last, we believe, beginning to appreciate rightly its value and force. The revival spirit is still alive in our churches, and if, with the recent lesson of the past, we will now push on our efforts with increased systematic endeavour and with united harmonious co-operation, we shall see such a revival of Christian graces in the Church, such an ingathering of sinners into the fold, and such an outpouring of the Divine Spirit as the world has never witnessed in all its previous history. "Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

JUDICIOUS PRAISE.

NO heart is insensible to words of praise, or the kindly smile of approbation; and none are utterly above being affected by censure or blame. Children are particularly sensitive in this respect. Nothing can discourage a child more than a spirit of incessant fault-finding; and perhaps nothing can exert a more baneful influence upon both parent and child. If your little one, through the day, has been pleasant and obedient, and you say to him, "My son, you have been good to-day, and it makes me very happy"; and if, with a more than usually affectionate embrace, you say, "Good night, my dear child," a throb of suppressed feelings fills his breast, and he resolves on always earning such approval. If your grown son, or daughter, have accomplished some difficult piece of work, rendering you essential assis-

tance; or have climbed some steep in the daily drill of study; or have acquired some new accomplishment, or added grace; or, better than all, have gained the victory over some bad habit or besetting sin—acknowledge it, see it, praise them for it. Let them see, by your added tenderness, the deep joy and comfort it gives you. Thus you will create a great incentive to right conduct, and lay a broad foundation of a character which shall be redolent of succulent fruit and fragrant blossoms.

KIND WORDS.

KIND words are easily and quickly spoken; they neither burn nor blast, and we have never heard of any mental trouble arising from them. Though they do not cost much, yet they accomplish much. They help one's own good nature and goodwill. Soft words soften our own soul. Angry words are fuel to the flames of wrath, and make them blaze more fiercely.

Kind words make other people good-natured. Cold words freeze people, and hot words scorch them, and bitter words make them bitter, and wrathful words make them wrathful. There is such a rush of all other words in our days, that it seems desirable to give kind words a chance among them. There are vain words, and idle words, and hasty words, and spiteful words, and silly words, and empty words, and boisterous words, and warlike words. Kind words also produce their own image in men's souls. And a beautiful image it is. They soothe, and quiet, and comfort the hearer. They shame him out of his sour, morose, unkind feelings. We have not yet begun to use kind words in such abundance as they ought to be used.—*Pascal*.

WORDS TO PREACHERS.

All apologies are founded in self-deception or pride. Move directly to your subject; the sooner you get at the main idea the better.

One telling illustration is better than a dozen, even if each of the dozen is quite strong.

Let the subject be of such importance as to invest you with an inspiration until the closing sentence.

Encourage rather than scold.

Do not make many points; two or three well insisted on will be longer remembered than half-a-dozen.

Never think of yourself, but of a soul saved or lost and Calvary.

Have only two or three headings and one application—clear, short, and to the point, so that it may still be ringing in the ears of the people as they are dispersing.

If you cannot preach from a text without an intimation that a different translation would improve it, select some other passage, or a different subject.

Feel that this sermon may be your last.

Let the thought of self pass in, and the beauty of a great action is gone, like the bloom from a soiled flower.—*Select*.

A HINT TO MOTHERS.

"I CANNOT understand," said a discouraged mother, the other day, "why my children are so much worse than those of other people. I am always correcting their faults, always telling them what not to do."

And there was just the trouble. Nothing is worse than to be continually reproving children, continually lecturing them on general principles, saying over and over, "Never do this. Never do that"; till the best children are bewildered and made rebels in spite of their own intentions. When a little one makes a mistake, set that special mistake right; but beware of legislating for a lifetime to people less than ten years old. We are often responsible for children's naughtiness because we forget that children have rights. The mother who is unfailingly polite herself to her little ones, will be repaid by their good manners. But the loud tone, the quick emphasis, the arbitrary speech, will be repeated by the second generation with inevitable accuracy, and the mother will be ashamed of it.

THE CHRISTMAS CAROL.

BY EMILIE SEARCHFIELD.

IT was Christmas morning. The air was clear and frosty, and the sun shone lovingly; while the bells—the merry, merry bells—carolled blithely, spreading the joyful tidings as far as they could. The ground was covered with snow, which, seeing as it was Christmas, was quite seasonable and right. It also seemed to remind one of the “robe of righteousness,” but then that is “whiter than snow,” and our mortal eyes can bear witness to naught more pure. Ah well, we must wait for the other!

But there was another melody going on—a sweeter music, too. Not in the lordly mansion, not by the cottage fire; it was in the poorhouse, and Granny Blake was the musician. Poor Granny! Why, she had complained of a cracked voice for at least thirty years, never dreaming that the cracked voice, dim sight, and dull hearing, as they bore her gradually away from earth and earthly things, served but to sweeten the remnants of life, so as to cause even angels to pause and listen to her words. There she lay on her tiny bed on that bright Christmas morning—for Granny had never sat up a single hour since she entered that dreary abode, which was just four years ago now. Around her stood a group of children, and Granny talked to them lovingly of the great birthday of the Lord Jesus. Everybody loved Granny, else the matron had not allowed those little ones free access to her bedside; and Granny loved everybody too, else she would never have had a longing desire to spread the Christmas melody.

There was a reason, too, why Granny loved to look on the sunny faces of the children. Years and years ago, when she was young, just such a sunny face had looked up into hers, and a sweet little voice had called her “Mother”—ah, but it was all so long, long ago! And since then Ned had gone to the bad, and Granny had come here to end her days. She had never thought to have done so—not in those days of bright, joyous hope; but then we never know what awaits us in the future! She had heard naught of Ned since he was transported some fourteen years back. Some said that he was not guilty of the offence which had sent him over the water, only that he had been so mixed up in the affair that it was hard to judge. Granny said never a word this way or that, only went on as before—praying, praying, praying to the great God to have mercy, and had her Ned right at the last.

The Christmas sun had gone down; only a fiery glow remained to tell of his glorious reign. But another Sun was shedding bright beams in Granny's room, even the “Sun of Righteousness with healing in His wings.” Outwardly it was grey and still, with only an occasional moonbeam flickering through the curtainless window, revealing a bit or two of holly which loving hands had placed where Granny could see them, the old woman herself sleeping peacefully on her bed, and two dark shadows, who seemed to be watching the quiet sleeper. By-and-by Granny awoke; then one of the shadows shuffled quickly away into a corner of the room where the grey light did not fall, and when a moonbeam flickered by the bed there was only the nurse bending over it—the nurse who had kindly managed to have Granny placed in a little room all to herself, because—well, because ‘Granny was good and loved by all.

“I heard some one move away. Have I been ill?” Granny's voice was very patient and resigned. Many a time had she awoke to find that a sudden faintness had frightened her kind friends, and that the doctor had sent her to sleep with his never-failing power, for nature to recruit her wasted strength. She thought now that it was the same, and fancied it was the doctor who had moved from her side.

“Granny,” said the nurse gently, “Granny, it is Christmas Day as you know, and God has been very good to you.” She paused, and Granny took up the word.

“Yes, yes, always good. Good in sending me you to be kind to me, and good in giving me another Christmas Day at all.”

“Yes, but Granny,” and the nurse's voice seemed full of deep, tender feeling; “God has sent you a better Christmas joy than you can ever dream of.”

The clouds cleared away just then, and the moon shone out, revealing everything in the room—Granny's face quivering with hope, the gentle, womanly face of the nurse, and

another—a dark, bearded man, he who had crept away into the shadowy corner.

“Oh! there's a letter from—from—” Granny's voice failed her, for the nurse's words had stirred the very depths of her soul.

Then the bearded man came forward, and with a low cry fell upon his knees, and rested his head where it had so often lain before, on his mother's breast.

“It is Ned! Ned! my own Ned!” and fondly the aged fingers stroked the dark, crisp locks on that bowed head. Oh, it was touching to watch them! So touching that the nurse wept—she hurried away to fetch a light. They were still the same when she returned, only Granny's fingers were quite still, and her face white as though she slept the long sleep of death. The nurse touched Ned's arm and he looked up.

“I have killed her—my good, patient mother!” he cried bitterly; but when the doctor, who chanced to be in the house, came and looked upon her, he said it was but one of the old attacks.

The usual remedies were applied, but they failed to produce sleep as heretofore, so when Granny came to herself, she opened her eyes at once upon her great Christmas joy. The doctor felt her pulse, and then beckoned the nurse from the room.

“Sinking fast,” he said gravely. “Is that the son come home again?” (for he knew all about Ned).

“Yes; it was his coming which brought on the fainting fit.”

“Ah, well! let him stay by her all the night, if she wishes it; nothing can hurt her; she won't live till morning though!” and so saying, he hurried away to his own home.

All through the long, dark hours Ned sat with that feeble hand grasping his, the while he poured into that strained, anxious ear the tale of days that were gone by for ever; and the fluttering heart thanked God, for the Christmas carol had been going on for Ned even in that distant land. He said that it was his mother's prayers and God's mercy which had wrought the change in him, and now for years past he had been spreading “the old, old story” by both life and words, and “please God,” as he said, “he would go on as he had begun.” Once and again he had written, but the letters must have been lost, and now, a free and happy man, he had come to gladden his mother's heart and make her happy too. Ah, yes; but he little knew how near she was to eternal joy! Nevertheless, when the grey dawn appeared the dull ears had ceased to listen and the heart to throb, and Ned was once more alone.

Another Christmas, and Ned stands in the old church, and by his side a gentle woman whom he calls wife; and another and another Great Birthday will, in succession, come and go, little children's voices will echo around his table and Granny's carol will still go on, for Ned and his wife are praying people, whose lives are daily praises to the One who came to this earth and lived and suffered for us.

Such lives are Christmas carols! Will your mothers cease to spread the blessed strains? Will you not rather like Granny pray for those near and dear to you, living to God yourself, and making melody for others. Then in the end Granny's reward will be yours, and the carol—your life story—shall still swell on through other lives, making music both in TIME and ETERNITY.

“Then, when in scenes of glory,
You sing the New, New Song,
'Twill be the Old, Old Story
That you have loved so long.”

MARIAN'S LOVE.

IN that most interesting and useful book, entitled, “Mister Horn and his Friends,” the Rev. M. G. Pearse relates a beautifully touching incident, showing the depth of love that even a little child may show for Jesus. After a powerful homily by Mister Horn on the blessedness of giving to the Lord, the author goes on to say:—

Little did any think that within a week of that Sunday morning Mr. Horn's sermon would come to the mind of one of the hearers with a new meaning and a force as if every word of it had been on fire, and had burnt its way right to his heart. That one was James Niggardly himself.

Of Mr. Niggardly's three daughters, the youngest was

Marian, a little bright-eyed, bright-haired, laughing maiden of eight summers. She wore sunshine always, and wherever she stepped came gladness and happiness like the joy that greets the sun in early spring.

All day long her sweet voice was heard singing through the house or roaming in the garden, and wherever it reached James Niggardly's ears it seemed to wake up something of the old better self that lay sleeping within. Everybody loved her, they couldn't help themselves about that. But her father's devotion was more than love—she was his idol. And marvellous was the power she had with him. The hard, stern, selfish Jim Niggardly found nothing a trouble that little Marian asked, and nothing was a sacrifice that could please her, whatever it might be. Why you might have come upon him amidst ledger and day-book, sitting there at his office desk—he the great James Niggardly, Esquire, with little Marian at his side making all his busy world stand still, whilst he bent over the troublesome work of mending her broken doll. If ever his voice regained its old ring and the cheeriness of former days, it was as little Marian ran for a romp. If anything brought back the simple, kindly Jim Niggardly that used to be, it was as he yielded to some request of his little maiden's.

As is so often the case with children who die young, she was full of an old-fashioned religiousness—very simple, yet so constant and so real that it seemed the growth of years. Does not Heaven mature the spiritual in such, and make these little ones who are going to join the saints in light, meet for their inheritance?

One day when she was not yet four years of age, her father was lying in a darkened room suffering from some temporary indisposition. The silence was disturbed by a very gentle knock at the door, followed at once by the intrusion of a sunny face and sunny hair, and a little voice asked plaintively, "May I come in?" And Marian crept over and sat down beside the sofa.

"Papa," she whispered, "if it won't hurt you I am come to read to you." Quite unable to read, she opened a book she brought with her, and, as if reading, she repeated with exquisite simplicity these words that she had learned:—

"And they brought young children to Jesus that he should touch them: and His disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it He was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And He took them up in His arms, and put His hands upon them, and blessed them."

Then she closed the book and kissed him very gently, whispering, "Good-bye, papa; I hope that will do you good. I have asked Jesus to make you better, and He will, I know." And she left him in tears.

Little Marian's love to Jesus was not only an affection for Him who had long ago lived a life of yearning pity, and who had died for all men on the cross; nor was it only the thought of the glorious King who hears and helps us when we cry unto Him. It was the devotion of her whole being to One who was to her a constant Presence and a Personal Friend. There was not a thought, not a feeling, about anything, that she did not share with Him. Her toys, her dresses, her opinions of people, all the little incidents that made up each day of her life, were talked of to Him with a simplicity and confidence that realised Him as "the Friend that sticketh closer than a brother." The little maiden loved Him with all her heart, and could keep nothing from Him.

With Mister Horn she was a great favourite, and many a visit was paid for an hour's talk in the garden with Marian. To him perhaps she owed much of the intense love that she felt for the Saviour, for he, more than any other, had told her of Him. She had learned his favourite text when she was very little, and all the thoughts and motives of her life were shaped and coloured by it.

"Mamma," she often said, "can you tell how it is that Jesus should care so much for me, and love me? Isn't it wonderful, Mamma. He gave Himself for me. I do love him for it, very, very, very much. Don't you, Mamma?" Sometimes she stood quietly by the window, wrapped in some deep thought, and then looking up, she would say—"O, Mamma, I do love Jesus so—I want to give Him every-thing; you and papa, and all of us, and Mister Horn, and all

that I've got; and the sun and the flowers, and everything there is. You know He gave Himself for me."

Without any formal resolution on her part, she instinctively came to look upon all her money as belonging to her dearest Friend. It was perhaps the only thing that she had absolutely in her own disposal, and so she naturally gave it to Him to whom she was so devoted. A money-box was the treasury of her little offerings, and of her possessions nothing was more prized than this. To her mind Jesus was still standing watching the gifts that came into the treasury. One day her father thought the sum too large to be given all at once, and hinted as much. Little Marian looked up in wonder and said, "I must put it all in, you know, papa, or else Jesus won't be able to look at me with a smile, and say, 'She did cast in all that she had.'"

THE CEDAR CHEST.

It was a pleasant home-like room, where Miss Jerusha and Miss Abby Brown sat in the twilight of a May evening: sat so quietly, that the click of the knitting-needles was plainly heard.

It had been a busy, house-cleaning day. Betty, the maid of all work, and Miss Abby had finished the attic, and the "spare room," and as usual the contents of the "cedar chest" had been brought down in two large clothes-baskets for Miss Jerusha to look over, her lameness preventing her going up and down stairs.

She had unfolded each garment, shaken it carefully, looked it over, folded it again, and when all was ready, the baskets were taken to the attic, and these relics of departed friends laid again in the chest. It was always a sad duty, and memory was busy to-night recalling the loved ones whose garments she had just handled.

At last she spoke, "Abby, I am thinking what brother John's wife will do with the things in the cedar chest, when we are gone. Of course, we can't expect her to set as much store by them as we do, and I've often heard her say, that she will keep nothing that she does not need, and that would be of use to some one else. I had rather give them away myself, and—and—I will do it." The last few words came slowly and with effort.

Miss Abby was dumb, not knowing what to say. Fifteen years younger than her sister, who seemed to regard her as a child, she seldom expressed her opinion, except to assent to Miss Jerusha's.

Now, after a few moments' silence, and dropping of many stitches, she merely said, "Yes, sister," and tried to pick up her stitches and her thoughts at the same time. How glad she was she dared not say. Her health allowed her to mingle more in the busy world than her sister could do, and in her visits among the poor she had often thought longingly of the garments that might keep so many warm. Now that sister had made up her mind, she knew that the "deceit" was unalterable, and was already planning the distribution, when Miss Jerusha continued:

"Betty shall have father's cloak for her father; he is a good old Scotchman, and goes regularly to 'kirk.' I wish he had had it before. Mother's best merino and the knit shawl will be just the thing for Deacon Kelsey's widow, and her cloak will make a Sunday suit for each of Mrs. Hepburn's twin boys. Brother George's clothes"—but we will not tell it all.

"Let all go," Miss Jerusha said, and Abby of course responded "Yes, sister."

And they did it, not without trembling hands and voices, and eyes that were often very misty; but there were no regrets, but instead, a blessed consciousness of doing right.

A few days after, the elder sister said, "I am glad I decided to give away those clothes, and I don't like to think of the empty chest. It would make a good cupboard, turned on one end, and two or three shelves put in, for that family that were burned out last week in Elm-court."

Reader, have you a cedar chest in your attic?—*Adel. and Guar.*

To be a man's own fool is bad enough; but the vain man is everybody's.—*William Penn.*

No one can become a Christian of strength and maturity without undergoing severe trials. What fire is to gold, such is affliction to the believer. It burns up the dross, and makes gold shine forth with unalloyed lustre.

OUR TRUE FRIEND.

If a person who is in sore trouble has a friend who, if he only know, would esteem it a great joy to comfort, and help to remove the trouble in question, and still the troubled one should neither write nor speak to the friend about it, we should in such conduct see no proof of friendship; and yet this is the conduct of not a few in reference to Jesus, who call Him friend. They go to others, and talk long enough, and loud enough too, but they tell Jesus very little. And yet, how eager is He to hear all about their troubles; He says, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"; "Cast thy burden upon the Lord"; "Call upon Me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee." Oh, how people turn trouble over and over in their own minds, instead of casting it upon their Friend; how they bury it in their own wounded hearts, instead of in the depth of God's mercy. A person whose heart was almost broken said the other day, "I will tell all to Jesus." She actually started to do so, but Mrs. Halt-by-the-way told her to wait a little longer; and she has been waiting ever since, and her trouble has got none the less. One Mrs. Melancholy has been in a sad plight for the last year; she calls Jesus friend, but somehow or other she has the sad habit of hugging closer and closer her sorrows to her own heart. She called in the minister the other day, and together they told Jesus of the sorrow she was in; and there was such a change, the woman's face became radiant with bliss; but as soon as ever the door was closed and the minister gone, she began to sigh and fret; she actually wouldn't let her Friend Jesus keep her burden. Oh, what poor troubled ones came to Him in the days of His flesh, some for themselves, and others for their friends; some with physical, some with moral, and some with mental troubles; and He opened wide His loving, strong arms, and relieved them all. And what He did then, He wants now to do.—*The Teacher's Theme.*

THE DEATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like His.—Numbers xliii. 10.

THE death of the righteous can belong to none but the righteous. If your career is not like his, your close cannot be. To begin and continue like him is the only way to end like him. "God will render to every man according to his deeds, to them who, by patience continuance in well doing, seek for glory, honour, and immortality, eternal life. But unto them that do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil." And there is no deviation from that law; it cannot be evaded, it cannot be

repealed, it cannot be suspended, it cannot be modified, it must have its course, for it is the exponent of the changeless character of God. There may be the resemblance of a righteous man's death. The worst of characters sometimes have that. Not seldom indeed is there calmness and strength in the death of the wicked; and we have heard it said of the vilest of men, "His end was peace." And on the contrary, good men sometimes die amidst fear and tumult—their sun goes down in cloud and storm, and the perplexed and baffled spectator is left to ask, "how dieth the wise man? even as the fool"; but these are only the outward circumstances of death, its scenery and surroundings; the great realities are hidden from our view; and the real difference between the two is infinite.

Live like the righteous, brethren, and like the righteous you will die. It may not be triumphantly, but it will be safely. The outward circumstances will be nothing; even the mood and feelings of the hour will be nothing. All will be right if the heart is right. You may even die with a struggle, and in the dark; there may seem to be wanting all

the evidences of the death of the righteous; no matter; you will die safely if you have lived purely; and the life which has been one long aspiration after the purity of God, will find at death its instantaneous answer in the spiritual perfection to which it has aspired. We cannot forget that the most righteous man that this world ever saw died in the dark—"Jesus Christ the righteous." Oh, that death! it was the death of a righteous man, of a man who had no sin and knew no sin; and yet it was a death of surpassing grief, and ignominy, and pain; not like the death of a righteous man; for the world gnashed its teeth upon Him as if He had been a criminal, and both heaven and earth seemed to treat him as an outcast and undone. But oh! He was a righteous man, and this was the explanation of it. "He was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

No life of righteousness had been possible to us, without the death of that righteous man, but since "He has died unto sin," we may "live unto God"—live like Him, inspired with a principle of eternal righteousness, and through that death and its sanctifying influence we may die like him—full of patience, courage, faith, devotion—in pain, it may be—in darkness, it may be, but still safe, acceptable, and blest; and thus in the truest sense of all we may die "the death of the righteous"—the death of Christ, and "our last end may be like His."

J. W. B.

Nothing can be politically right that is morally wrong. A good man is the next best thing on earth to a good woman. Truth is too simple for us; we do not like those who unmask our illusions. God sends His rain in gentle drops, else flowers would be beaten to pieces.



THE REV. E. PAXTON HOOD.
(From a Photograph by Mr. St. George, Islington.)

CLOUDS WITH SILVER LININGS.

A SERMON.

BY THE REV. E. PAXTON JOOD.

"And now men see not the bright light which is in the clouds."—
Job xxxvii. 21.

CLOUDS, clouds. There are none of us who have not looked at them. Deep occasion have we had to look at them, all of us, if we have human hearts. We have regarded perhaps their strange features from many moods. Woods, mountains, sea—these have been reckoned to be Nature's three great poems; to them I will add clouds. Is it not very pleasant, when the time of reverie is on us, to lie down on the top of the hill, or in the shade of the old wood, or in the deep dingle, and look up at them sailing along, mysterious, portentous, majestic, various, ominous? How they shape themselves after the mood of your own mind! How they throw your own spirit upon the cloud, and see forms painted there in all the gorgeousness of amber, and gold, and sapphire, or black and lurid! Do not you think they are great books, clouds? Homes of the thunder, palaces of the lightning, conductors of the meteors, halls of the tempest; where all those uproars that we have so recently heard go on, in storm and hurry, and battle; where they discharge their artillery at one another, and shoot out their arrowy glances and their glittering spears, perhaps never heard of down here in this little mole-hill of a world. Yes, when we get among the clouds, we soon make a flying horse, and we racket away through the universe upon it. I think we have not much love for that which is suggestive if we do not find many pictures given to us out of the clouds.

Clouds have an interpreted force, and as I am to show you they have silver linings—grim, and dark, and gloomy as they are, they have gentle and bright teachings; they are capable of daguerreotyping upon our paths bright letters, if we will but stop to read them. Men see not the bright light which is in the dark cloud. Let us see whether we cannot detect some of the light.

In the first place in the character of God, the cloud has silver linings.

"Dark with excessive light his skirts appear"

So the great poet says. In nature God appears to us very much more as the God of mystery than as the God of mercy. I read it so. I am not going to give you other men's readings or impressions; I will only give you my own. I have said again and again here, and still expect to say it, that to me nature is no Gospel. To me nature never has been more than a very mysterious poem which I may with a very great deal of patience spell something merciful out of, but which so thwarts my conceptions of the loveliness, and lustre, and beauty of him who is called here the God of love, that I scarce know how to read the page as natural theologians would have me read it. The character of God is a great, strange, dark cloudland; but it has its silver lining. The old writer said, "The light of Thy countenance maketh me afraid"; and it is because of the light of that countenance that God covers it with a cloud, that he holdeth back his face and spreadeth a cloud upon it. He dwelleth in incommunicable, inaccessible light. No man hath seen him, nor can see him; and yet on the fringes of that cloud which vests him and passes before his throne, we see indications and traces of the benignity and beauty of his character. You may see in the fringe of the cloud before the throne of God, what he is. And this book, as I shall have occasion to say presently, is only something like a cloud before the throne of God. Perfect revelation you cannot bear, perfect revelation you could not have—I mean the revelation of God as he is; I do not expect that any angel ever has had it. I meet with some conceited old brethren sometimes, who fancy that when they die they are to be let into the mystery of the Divine character all at once, that God will show them himself, so that he will have nothing further to reveal. I can only pat them on the back, and let them go along their own way. I would not disturb their ideas; let them live on in them, and when they come into the next world they will be none the less nappy because they find heaven has more mysteries than they supposed on earth. All we know is, that he holds back the splendour of his own being, for we could not bear it. You have heard of the man who went to look at the sun, and was blinded by it, and arrived at last at the conclusion, that if the sun was so bril-

liant, God, who made the sun and rolled up all the lightnings, and all the beams, and all the grandeur which blaze and burn and brighten there, must be far brighter himself. Blessings, therefore, on his name, for giving us intimations of what he is; blessings on his name for showing to us weak, frail children something of his character, for showing to us how that which is terrible in him is tempered and toned down, so that we are able to adore, and not be dismayed; for that is how we ought to come to God. Never be it yours or mine, dear friends, to come to God with impudent haste; never be it yours or mine to come to God with sandalled feet; never be it yours or mine to bow down in his presence as if he were altogether such a one as ourselves. We must always come with adoration, but we must look up, and although the cloud is so strangely thick, look, look! A bright light fringes it round, shining on our pathway, and telling that "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." God is constantly encouraging us thus, and saying to us while we come, especially to tottering and trembling people, "Fear not. I am indeed God, and thou art man; I am indeed the Creator of all the earth; all things have had their being from me; there is no lightning that blazes, there is no meteoric fire that shoots across your midnight heavens, there is no star that rolls its wonderful and awful way, there is no sea that roars, there is no wind that beats the sea into a tempest upon the distant ocean, or that blows upon the top of the tall hill that has not had its being from me. But, poor child of clay, fear not for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God." There is light thus, you see, behind the cloud; there is a silvery lining to the thick darkness in which God invests himself.

Again, in the pathway of providence the clouds have a silvery lining. The providence in which he moves is frequently as cloudy as even the vesture that robes round his own being and character. And how unreasonable, dear friends, it is to suppose that all providential arrangements are to be known and seen by us. It is as much as I can do, and I think I have got a little way towards doing it—it is as much as I can do to put the two ends of my life so far together. I have recently been thinking during the last two or three years, that God has been nearer to me than I used to think he was. There was a time since I have been a professed believer in Christian truth, when I used to take up these ideas as the appropriate ideas for religious men, that God did not intermingle and intermeddle much with us, that he let our affairs go on, as he lets the stars go on, that he rolled worlds into being and men and races into being, and governed all indeed by his great power, weighed all in great and infinite balances, but did not meddle much with personal human affairs. I have quite got out of that way of thinking; I am a long way from that. I think God is very nigh to those who profess to be his, if they are his indeed. I am never weary of thinking—I could weep to think of it—how near he is to us, and that the ways and walks of our life, what we may call in our way the high-streets of our existence, as well as the bye-lanes, have been all marked out by him, and all have relation to his Divine knowledge, to his Divine mind. If that is not the true character of God, then I do not see that I have very much to choose between Christianity, as it might be called, and Deism or Atheism. If God be merely the Lawgiver dwelling at a great distance, far off from his creatures, far off from me, I do not see that I gain much. I come before him, then, as he reigns in the dreadful temple of immensity. I veil my brow and bow myself before the great, awful, shadowy darkness, and feel that there, far beyond the Milky Way, far beyond the burning, blazing galaxies, far off from solar heavens, myriads of miles away from solar influences, he dwells; it is nothing to me; no, there is no consolation in that. And while I ignore that idea with my feelings, my reason ignores it too, and teaches me that if he be God, the least thing to him must be equal to the greatest, and that he knows my affairs as truly as he knows the pathway of a planet; that he knows the little birth, the little life, and the little death in my family as much as he knows the ranks of those nodding, and plumed, and elevated intelligences that burst constantly into the grandeur of consecutive song—Holy, holy, Lord, in strains of fire from their seraphic lips. Yes, there is a bright light in the dark path of providence marking our world. God's justice is terrible, but it is lined with mercy; God's terror is terrible, but it is lined with love; God's power is terrible, but it is lined with wisdom. The first is a cloudy grandeur; the last throws tenderness over that attribute and light over my path.

I should like to keep you a moment or two longer on that thought, because I really feel an interest in it. I feel anxious that you should love God, and that you should be happy in loving him. You do not know how sweet the hearthstone will be when God comes and sits down, a sacred, though unseen presence there, when you feel that he knows your ways, has fixed the bounds of your habitation, and portioned out your inheritance for you. We can see how this is in many pathways of providence. I think we can see how God has set one thing against another in some measure in our own life, so that the cloud brings its own revenue of light along with it. The law of compensation may be said to balance the whole of our probationary state. The great men who have lived in times gone by, and have done God's work in the world—how we see a cloud going before them, and a cloud hovering over them; and perhaps they only saw the cloud. Look at Abraham, pushed out not knowing whither he went, with a horror of great darkness round about him. It was not cheering or encouraging; the cloud hemmed him in. But over all there was the presence—"Fear not; I am thy shield." Oh! that raises the meanest life to the grandeur of an epic poem—"Fear not; I am thy shield." And God says it as much to John Smith, and William Thompson, and Mary Jameson, and Charles Perkins, to any of these insignificant and unhistorical, undramatic, unepic beings, as to Abraham in the days of old. There is a shield hovering over thee, my brother, and it is on the arm of God; there is a shield hovering over thee, my sister, and it is in the hand of God. The arrows may fly; they cannot touch thee until that shield, in God's providence, shall allow the stroke. Swords of spiritual foes may glance about thee; Satan may "desire to have thee, that he may sift thee as wheat"; but if God has said to thee, "Fear not, I am thy shield," thou art safe, until in the last ecstasy of entirely redeemed existence you fall prostrate on the other side of the shore, when the waves are all behind, all behind, where you find yourself in that realm of light where the shield shall be needed no more, but where the sun shall shine for ever through an eternal existence.

It is beautiful to see how special things link into general cases. I have often thought there is in our life something like that pilgrimage to Emmaus, when the two disciples were walking along, and musing in their hearts upon all the desolation that had fallen upon their path. Ah! they were saying, "It is all over now; it is all over now." Suddenly there comes in their way a mysterious stranger, dignified in mien, loving in his eye, tender in his speech; and he beguiles them into conversation. What was the occasion of their sorrow? Why were they so sad? They put it all into one short sentence—"He is dead, and we trusted that it had been he who had redeemed Israel." "It is all gone; the cloud has swept down upon it; his death has buried all our hopes; and here, unable to meet the rest of the brethren, we walk upon our sad and solitary way. Prophecy, miracle, ancient scroll, past figure and type, Shekinah, all are buried in gloom. He is dead. Unto us all is dead; all is gone: we trusted that it had been he who should redeem Israel." They did not know that he who had redeemed and would redeem Israel was walking by their side. They did not know that when the cloud hung over the cross a silver lining fringed the cloud, so bright that never had angel seen the like of it. He who was suspended on the cross saw the fringe of that cloud too; he saw of the travail of his soul, and was satisfied. Ought we not constantly to take that idea with us as an illustration of how the greatest darkness may only be a curtain, behind which there is the greatest and most merciful light?

Again, in the interpretation of the truth the cloud has often a silver lining. I have already intimated to you how the words of this book have great darkness in them. It is much easier to ask questions on the difficulties of Scripture than it is to answer them. I have no doubt there are plenty of captious people here. In a congregation like this, there will be sure to be a number of persons with critical tongues and itching ears; and let me tell you, my dear people, you may ask questions enough in five minutes to puzzle an archangel. You cannot have the truth explained to you until you yourselves have entered into the state for which that truth was written. The marvel of this great book, with all its cloudy utterances, and "dark sayings upon a harp," its strange similitudes and allegorical grandeurs and splendours—the marvel of it is, that it paints and describes states that, but for this book, would never have been depicted, so that all the world's tossed and irritated hearts might come there and find an answer corresponding to their own condition, and driv-

consolation. Yes, if you want to know a truth, you must get into the state into which, and from which, the truth speaks. You remember the case of the man who could not make out that strong saying of our Lord, about the mountain being removed and cast into the sea. He did not know what to do with the mountain; he was perfectly sensible that he could not cast it into the sea, and he was greatly perplexed about it. He believed the truth, but that mountain was always in his way. During this dilemma, he received a considerable injury from a neighbour, and (as most people do in such cases) waxed very wroth about it, and got very irritated. Still, there was the old mountain—he could not forget that. He did feel disposed to forgive his neighbour; on the contrary, he wanted to be well revenged, as most of us do when our brother has offended us. While thinking of his revenge, and also of that mountain, which was his real spiritual difficulty, he somehow or the other came to the reading of the passage—he turned to the very Scripture, and read, "It is impossible but that offences will come, but woe unto him through whom they come. If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him; and if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee saying, I repent, thou shalt forgive him." The apostles, fairly staggered with that, said, "We can never do it; Lord, increase our faith." And the Lord said, "If ye had faith, ye should say to this mountain, Be thou removed, and cast into the midst of the sea." "Ah!" said the man, "I have got it now: that is the mountain that was to be removed. O Lord," said he, "remove this mountain of hate from my heart, and help me to love my brother." He found out what it was; he was brought face to face with that spiritual state; he could go to God, and God rolled the mountain away. He loved his brother, and he lost his mountain. I only mention this as one illustration that we need to be brought face to face with the particular state before we can see the bright light in the dark cloud. But the bright light comes; the darkness clears up. True, over all this glory there is a defence, a covering, as it is said, "Over all the glory there shall be a covering for a defence." How is it there is so much similitude, so much allegory, so much figure? Why, it is frequently that it may conceal—quite as frequently as that it may reveal—in order that the veil may hang before the picture until you are brought into that state in which you touch the spring, when up flies the curtain, and you see a charming and lovely countenance looking out from behind the curtain which you could not comprehend before. Set a man who does not know anything at all about truth to preach me a sermon on the words, "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy water spouts; all thy waves and thy billows have gone over me." Set a man who never prayed in his life, or never lost a friend, who never was in any circumstances of deep sorrow and affliction, to preach on the words "Thou hast covered thy face with a cloud that my prayer should not pass through." But let some terrible providence take a man by the shoulders, and press him down, almost against his will, upon the ground, upon his knees; when a great cloud is over his head, when he cannot bring his child back to life, when his wife will not hear him as she lies in her shell, when he cannot build his house again that was burned last night, when he cannot call his brother to life again who left him three years ago, and died in Australia; set him upon his knees then, with a thick black cloud over him, and he is compelled to say, "Thou hast covered thy face with a cloud that my prayer should not pass through"; he will understand the meaning of that lamentation, and its relation to his own state. But, brethren, he shall find that that cloud, dark as it is, and though it hangs over him for weeks, or months, nay, for years, at last begins to brighten on the edge; first it brightens on the edge, then it becomes lighter and lighter, until at length he lifts up his eye and sees that that which is gloom has become glory, that that which was sadness has turned into gladness before his face.

First, let me say, fellow-pilgrims, fellow-soldiers, we must be cheerful under the night. Why even in the dark night, there are one or two stars: and even if there are not one or two stars, if it is all cloudland up there, and only the thick heavy masses rolling and marching; then say we with Peter, "Master, it is good to be here." We will pitch our tabernacle under the night, and the night will be filled with music. Oh! great is the consolation that comes at night. Be cheerful beneath the cloud. And if the cloud should come in the day time still be cheerful. The Israelites had the cloud in the day. I recollect once kneeling with familiar friendliness and love around the family altar of

a dear friend whom I loved as I believe I loved no other on this earth, and he prayed for me that I might know what it was to have the pillar of cloud when the day was too bright, and the pillar of fire when the night was too dark. Did I mention to you what I thought as I saw that picture of the German painter some time ago? I could not make out what he meant by it. It was called "cloud-land," and it seemed nothing but cloud on cloud; but what do you think? As I looked I saw that every cloud turned into an angel or an angel's wing; and the whole picture, that at first seemed only a mass of gloom, looked out upon me with hundreds of angels' eyes and hundreds of angels' wings. So with all clouds, if God comes nigh to us by them; look at them, and they turn into angels. "They are not desirable in themselves, they are not pleasant; no chastisement, no affliction, no cloud, is at present joyous, but grievous." We foolish men would walk always in the day-brightness; we do not want clouds; but the angels know their value, and God too, or he would never send them to us.

Finally, there are clouds in some parts of the universe that have no silver linings. There are thick, dense, rolling masses of clouds, the gatherings together of sin, retribution for sin, and Divine vengeance on account of sin—and down beneath those clouds there are beings who live, and live, and look up, and look up, but no gleam of glory ever brightens their gloom; no star ever breaks the spell of that prison-house. The lights there are but the fitful lightnings that flit to and fro, the ministers of Divine retribution and condemnation. There is a place so gloomy, so black, so terrible, a place where all are sinners, where there is no pardon for sin. It is hemmed in, and walled in, so there is no possibility of a ray of gladness entering in, any hope of comfort, any gleam of hope. Oh! may all our clouds meet us in this world! May all our clouds have fringes of beauty to them! May there never be to any of us a cloud so deep and dark that prayer will not pass through it! When our mortal puts on immortality, may we know the last of clouds and enter into the realm of perfect sunshine, perfect bliss! "Comfort one another with these words." Breaking hearts, bursting hearts, sad hearts, wearied, wayfaring hearts, hearts burdened and bowed down, comfort one another with these words. With your staff in your hand march on. I hope I have not said what has seemed unsympathetic, coarse, or careless. I draw nigh to you, my dear friends, in the love of a man, the love of a brother; and I say, so live, so walk, that the light may come to you without a veil, through Jesus Christ our Mediator, and that at last you may rise up, through His grace and mercy, to that realm where they need no cloud. Amen.

THE APOSTLE PETER.

BY REV. J. R. MACDUFF, D.D.

ONE of the most beautiful of ancient legends regarding the close of Peter's life (if legend indeed we may call an incident which has been narrated both by Ambrose and Origen) would seem to indicate that he was not altogether bereft of friends. The well-known story they have left is this:—

At the instigation of some of the faithful, Peter was urged to flee for his life. At first, the proposal was met by him with a decided negative, justly fearing reflections on his courage and constancy, —that friends and foes might alike accuse him of shrinking from those sufferings for his dear Lord, to the endurance of which he had exhorted others. But the appeal of their prayers and tears as to the value of his life to them and the infant Church, fortified too as the recommendation was by Christ's own injunction (Matt. x. 23), for the moment overcame his scruples. With reluctance he acceded: and by night was assisted over the prison wall. He betook himself along that same Appian Way, by which, probably, as in the case of Paul, he had entered the city. He succeeded in getting two miles beyond the Porta Capena, and was nigh the spot, bordering on the wide Campagna, which was soon after sacred as the place of repose for Christian dead. The same Lord, whom last he saw in the ascension-cloud, appeared to him hastening in the direction of the city. The fugitive Apostle immediately recognises the Divine Master. The same penetrating look, doubtless, was cast upon him, with which he had once been confronted in the palace-court of the High Priest—a look of sadness and gentle reproach.

Peter was the first to break silence with the question—"Lord, whither goest Thou?" The answer was immediately returned, "I go again to be crucified."

The interrogator continued—"Lord, wast Thou not crucified once for all?"

"Yes," was the reply, "but I saw thy flight from death, and I go to be crucified in thy stead."

"Lord," was the immediate answer of Peter, "I go to obey Thy command."

"Fear not," was the Master's farewell word as He vanished from sight, "for I am with thee."

The Apostle at once retraced his steps, returned to his cell, and surrendered himself to his keepers.

The above story, we are aware, is by many rejected;—classified among the "apocryphal writings," and deemed only another of the many similar inventions of a credulous age. It may be so; but we see nothing in the narrative itself to relegate it to the category of the purely mythical and legendary. True, it is not recorded in Scripture. It has no shadow of an inspired basis. But the answer to this is—that the whole narrative of Peter's later life is left unchronicled by inspired pens; so that such omission is not by any means fatal to its credibility. Similar Divine appearances of the Lord Jesus were, moreover, by no means uncommon in the life and experience of St. Paul. The revelation of Christ to him on the way to Damascus did not stand alone. In Corinth, when oppressed in spirit by the obstinate rejection of the Gospel message by his fellow-countrymen, that same Lord appeared to him "in a vision by night," with words of encouragement—words proceeding from the lips of a glorified Person—"I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city" (Acts xviii. 9, 10). When apprehended at Jerusalem, and called upon to make his defence on the Stairs of Antonia, he narrates a similar appearance of his Lord while he was praying in the Temple: "And it came to pass that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the Temple, I was in a trance; and saw Him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning Me. And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on Thee: and when the blood of Thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him. And He said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles" (Acts xxii. 17-21). Yet again, when he was put in safe ward by the captain of the guard who had generously rescued him from the violence of the Sanhedrim: "The night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul; for as thou hast testified of Me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness at Rome" (Acts xxiii. 11). Nor need we remind our readers of an instance still later on than the closing years of Peter; when the same heavenly Redeemer appeared to the last of His living Apostles in the Isle of Patmos; He revealed Himself in the lustrous of His glorified humanity, with the circlet of stars in His right hand, and speaks as a Divine, glorified Person. "And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am He that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death" (Rev. i. 17, 18). We can substantiate with no proofs this alleged analogous appearance of the Lord to Peter; but we have said enough to show from the experience of his most like-minded and like-privileged brothers, that such an appearance was not impossible in itself,—that it was by no means novel or exceptional in apostolical story; and the details of the narration as regards Peter himself are certainly in remarkable keeping with his character and antecedents.—From "Foot-steps of St. Peter."

Duty can never have too much of our diligence, nor too little of our confidence.

Do all the good you can in the world, and make as little noise about it as possible.

A man's conduct is only a picture-book of his creed. He acts after what he believes.

Humble we must be, if to heaven we go;
High is the roof there, but the gate is low.

Absence of occupation is not rest:

A mind quite vacant is a mind distressed.

ROWLAND HILL'S SAYINGS.

RECIPROACITY.

THE grace that leads to Christ previously comes from Christ; if I live on Him, I feel that I am enabled to live to Him; there is nothing will teach me to live above the world, but living upon Christ.

Ever may we be looking to God to implant the *principle*, and then we may depend upon it we shall abound in the *practice*.

Directly I am brought under the blessed influence of the life of God, every pulsation will be to His glory.

"THE ROBE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS."

Though I am imperfect in myself, there is a word tells me I am complete in Christ—the redemption is completely wrought out: the righteousness that is unto all, and upon all them that believe, is a robe of which it is truly said, "no age can change its glorious hue," but it will be our everlasting ornament in the mansions of glory.

THE DEVIL'S RARITIES.

What is to be done with those professors who are half for Baal and half for God? They know so much of religion that they are spoiled for the world; they do not go *very often* to the play-house, only now and then as a *rarity*. *God keeps us from the devil's rarities!* Do all that come to the Lord's Table prove themselves to be what they ought to be? I would they did! I think if the devil could pick out from among the people of God those that belong to him, he would have a pretty good picking: if I am not fit for earthly communion, am I fit for the communion above?

A PREACHER'S AMBITION.

I see many of my juniors called away before me into an eternal world: I pray when my time comes (and that must now be near), that I may die with an honest pulpit conscience that I have preached the truth from my heart.

THE BLESSING OF AFFLICTION.

The children of God should never look upon afflictions as sent in anger, but as merciful visitations, for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth: every twig of His rod grows in the paradise of His love; do let your afflictions have the tendency to prompt you to prayer: a child of God, in an imprisoned state of affliction, is far better off than sinners at liberty.

MEDITATION.

There is nothing more glorious to meditate upon than the infinite dignity and majesty of Christ; God enlarge our vessels that we may receive more from Him, and make us to hunger and thirst more after Him; 'tis the sweetest thing in the world to be overwhelmed with gratitude towards Him.

HOLY COURAGE.

Come, beloved, and magnify our glorious King by calling down His mighty power for vengeance on your sins. Don't be a coward; remember, holy courage is a heavenly virtue. The grand work of Christ is to destroy the work of the devil; the more we know of Christ, the more we shall hate sin; 'tis sin alone that keeps us from Him.

STRENGTH IN WEAKNESS.

Don't look after the power in yourselves, but expect the power of God to rest upon you. May the Lord make you know that you have nothing in yourselves: the ground of real humility is a knowledge of ourselves, feeling we can do nothing without God.

SENSE OF SHORTCOMING.

Nothing sets us right so much as a *sense* of our shortcomings before God. Do you love God more, or pray to Him more, than you should? Examine yourselves and blush for shame. 'Tis strange we should dictate to God, yet there is often a great deal of this in our proud hearts; there is not a more beautiful metaphor than the clay and the potter. Oh, yield to every touch of God's providence: remember you are nothing but ignorance and folly, and all that is wise and good comes from God, and from God alone.

Not the most learned, eloquent, forward, wealthy, influential, talented, or pious man, but the one best adapted for the work, is to be chosen to superintend the school.

TRUE BEAUTY.

Beautiful faces they that wear
The light of a pleasant spirit there
It matters little if dark or fair.

Beautiful hands are they that do
The work of the noble, good, and true —
Busy for them the long day through.

Beautiful feet are they that go
Swiftly, to lighten another's woe,
Through summer's heat and winter's snow.

Beautiful children, if rich or poor,
Who walk the pathways sweet and pure
That lead to the mansions strong and sure.

Beautiful they who, from every land,
Hasten to join the blood-washed band
Shining in glory at Christ's right hand.

CRIMPING-PINS AND CURL-PAPERS.

SIR ARTHUR HELPS, in one of his delightful books, remarks that we all ought to make it a point of duty to look our best for those at home. We ought to take more pains than we do, to be beautiful in the eyes that see us every day.

In the stories of Hannah More and Miss Edgeworth, the untidy young lady is represented as appearing in her family with her curl papers like a bristling forest about her head. Ringlets having now gone out of fashion, the young ladies of our generation have adopted crimping pins. Perhaps our granddaughters will read, in some antiquated romance or other, how Edith and Ada, who were going to a party, were surprised by an unexpected and malapropos call from their lovers, and were found in the disfiguring disguise of hair done up *a la* South Sea Islander. By that time it is to be hoped that the gospel of the beautiful will be so thoroughly accepted that every girl will emerge from her chamber in the morning fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and irresistible as an army with banners.

It is not so much what you wear, girls, as the way you put it on. Because the morning is cold and there's nobody home but father, don't go down in a forlorn old wrapper, worn-out slippers, and head hideous with prophetic frizzes. Surely your father has a right to see you looking your prettiest before he goes away to work for you all day. Or, if it is afternoon and stormy, and you are sure that nobody will venture out, and that no visitors will come in, have too much self-respect to lounge all day in the hurried toilet of the morning. Assume your afternoon dress and your most becoming tie, if it is only to delight the eyes of your darling little mother, who will be rested and cheered by your attractive looks. There will be days this coming winter when we shall be shut in our homes as the Canaanites were into Jericho. None will go out or come in. Outside will be the silent procession of the snow-flakes, and now and then the wild trumpet of the winds, like the priests with their ram's horns; and inside we, not like the poor Canaanites, in apprehensive alarm, will be happily busy by bright fires. Never seems home so luxurious as on such a day. When the parlour is in a state of blockade it is especially charming. But those days have temptations. It hardly seems worth while to dress. Who will see us? Who will notice? Who will care?

"See," "notice," "care"?—why, the dearest eyes in all the world. Suppose we try how much pleasure we can bestow in our own homes by special efforts to look beautiful. Did you ever observe that most people are more amiable when they are becomingly dressed than at any other time? It is certainly so; and whatever the hidden cause of it, it is a great deal easier to be good when one looks pretty well. Sophie May, in one of her nice stories for girls, makes her heroine put on her blue merino when everything is going wrong, on the principle that "matters won't be helped by my looking hateful."

OUR NOTE BOOK.

WHILE the work of human butchery and outrage, on the one hand, and the severity of the season on the other, have been cutting off hundreds of sufferers in the east of Europe, the benevolence of the English people has been aroused, and has responded to the appeal for help for the distressed refugees in Servia. Money, blankets, clothing, and food have been contributed without stint; but the cry still reaches us, and calls for further sacrifices on the part of those to whom an abundance has been given. Surplus clothing, and many articles of little or no use, stowed away in domestic recesses, would be very acceptable to the poor sufferers.

Messrs. Moody and Sankey's Labours in Chicago have been blessed with cheering success. The "Tabernacle" specially built for them has been erected with marvellous celerity. The building is capable of accommodating 10,000 persons, and since the opening has frequently been packed with hearers, thousands being drafted to other buildings opened for the overflow. The temporary absence of Mr. Moody, through the death of his brother, caused little diminution in the attendance, Major Whittle taking charge of the meetings. The churches generally have experienced a gracious visitation of the Holy Spirit, and a higher and healthier tone has been given to the piety of their members. Meanwhile the cry of many has been heard asking the way of salvation.

The Conference Hall, Midway-park, ever the scene or centre of operations having for their object the highest welfare of the people, is now busy with its winter's work. The Men's Night School is well attended, as many as 300 and upwards having presented themselves for instruction. The work is undertaken chiefly by the deaconesses in residence. To the various branches of a good English education are added the privileges of Biblical instruction, which is accompanied by singing and prayer. Coffee is supplied at a penny per cup, and is partaken of by the majority of those in attendance. May such institutions be largely multiplied!

The Wesleyan Revival Missions, both in London and the provinces, have been signally blessed. Conventions have been held in various centres, and a week of services has followed, consisting of noon prayer-meetings, special sermons by mission preachers, with after meetings for prayer and inquirers, children's services, experience meetings, and services of praise. It is impossible to tabulate the results, but the religious press of each week records large numbers of conversions, and the quickened zeal and piety of church members. In London the work was preceded by a ministers' meeting at Jewin street Chapel, when a large muster collected, and spent some hours in prayer, the reading of papers, and discussion. A convention of Christian workers met at City-road Chapel on Nov. 1 and 2. The meetings were presided over by the president of Conference and Dr. Osborn. We have not space to record the proceedings in detail, but it was felt that the period was one of very hallowed intercourse, and must have exercised a powerful influence on those who went forth to engage in the special work of the mission.

The Sheffield Mission Services in connection with the Church of England were abundantly successful. Nearly all the churches participated in the services. The Archbishop of York engaged zealously in the work, while the labours of the Rev. W. H. M. Aitken were remarkable for their power. The large Albert Hall was filled to overflowing when Mr. Aitken preached there. Services were held in many of the factories, and separate classes were addressed in services severally held for each, embracing business men, post-office officials, policemen, cutlers, colliers, armour-plate makers, etc., while the Gospel was "preached to the poor" in the workhouse and the infirmary. Besides the "mission preachers," numbers of laymen assisted, and rendered valuable aid in the work. Many conversions are reported, and the mission will long be remembered by the inhabitants of that large town.

The Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, in his late visitation at Gloucester Cathedral remarked that sceptical and irreligious thought had made advances during the last half generation which were now startling and disquieting all serious observers. Formerly unbelief was flippant and repulsive; now it was assuming a much more earnest tone, and there was not only a large amount of latent unbelief, but a very unrestrained avowal of it.

The town and neighbourhood of Bodmin has been blessed by a remarkable visitation of the Holy Spirit, more than 300 conversions being reported. Mid-day services, Bible readings, praise meetings, and the nightly preaching of the Gospel, with after-meetings, have all been well attended, and though the centre of the work was the Wesleyan Chapel, its blessings extended to those belonging to every denomination in the neighbourhood.

A Union Conference "for the promotion of the righteousness, peace, and joy of the true Christian life," has been held in the Assembly Rooms, Defoe-road, Stoke Newington. The conference extended over four days, commencing on Saturday, Nov. 11. Christians of all denominations were invited. The arrangements for each day were:—Prayer and conference, at 9 a.m.; ladies' meeting, 11 a.m.; lunch, 1 p.m.; general meeting, 3 p.m.; tea, 5 p.m.; conversational meeting, 6 p.m.; and general meeting, 7 p.m. The ladies' meetings were conducted by Mrs. W. E. Boardman and others. The Rev. W. E. Boardman, author of "The Higher Christian Life," etc., presided over the conference. Several gentlemen who have devoted themselves to the promotion of the entire consecration of believers, took part in the conference.

A congress was held recently at Geneva, the object of which was to further the observance of the Lord's Day. Representatives attended from England, France, Russia, Greece, Canada, and the United States. An international federation to promote the observance of the Sabbath was the result, and much good is expected to follow.

The winter meetings of the Wesleyan Missionary Society have commenced in earnest. The Leeds Auxiliary Anniversary, which is considered to inaugurate the new year of the society, which was first formed there, was a great success. The collections amounted to £1,753 2s. 8d., in addition to which £1,138 were promised at the Gledhow Breakfast meeting. The London Districts Auxiliary Meeting in Exeter Hall followed, when a large assembly entirely filled the hall. Dr. Punshon, Revs. G. T. Perks, M. A., W. O. Simpson, J. Jackson Wray, etc., were the speakers, the latter addressing himself to the children, of whom 500 were gathered together on the platform as choir for the occasion. Mr. Henry H. Fowler, of Wolverhampton, presided. Dr. Punshon shadowed forth the introduction of their mission into Japan, the natives of which country are said to be very intelligent and receptive of the truth.

OUR PROGRAMME FOR 1877.

WE have no reason to be dissatisfied with our success or our reception, but at the same time shall endeavour to excel ourselves next year. As an evidence of this, we would direct attention to the following especial features which our January number will introduce.

I. RANDOM THOUGHTS.—A series of racy sketches on topics of social interest, by the Rev. ARTHUR MURSELL.

II. GOLDEN TRUTHS.—Under this title will be given a brief exposition, tersely and pointedly written, of the international lessons for the month; useful to the teacher, and interesting to the general reader. By the Rev. THORNTON SMITH.

III. COMPLETE TALES.—Each number will contain, as at present, a complete tale, suitable for all ages, and by well-known authors, amongst whom we can promise will be found Miss M. A. PAULL, LILLIE MONTFORT, Mrs. E. R. PITMAN, Miss BEATRICE A. JOURNAN, Rev. JAMES YEAMES, Rev. JOHN THOMAS, Miss MARY BASKIN, Mrs. GEORGE CUPPLES, Miss EMILIE SEARFIELD, NELSIE BROOK, and others.

IV. THE MONTHLY SERMON.—Every number will contain, as now, a sermon by some celebrated divine (unmindful of denominational distinction), accompanied by a well-engraved portrait. The January preacher will be the late Rev. ROWLAND HILL.

V. THE HEROES OF THE COVENANT, and other Papers. By J. FULTON SMITH.

VI. OUR MUSICAL BOX.—A new piece of music, by the very best authors, will be given monthly under this heading.

VII. OUR NOTE BOOK will be as far as possible a reflex of the doings of the times.

VIII. THE CHILDREN'S CORNER will still be found interesting, and we trust useful, to children of all ages.

IX. MISCELLANEOUS ARTICLES, Short Sketches, Poetry, Notices of Books, etc., will be found in every number, and several other features will develop themselves as the year goes on. The paper will be also improved, and several typographical alterations made.

We trust, therefore, that with this attractive programme before them, our readers will do their very best for us, and, through us, themselves.

NOTICES OF BOOKS.

The Zoology of the Bible. By Harland Coultas. (London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 4s.) A most attractive book. The author writes succinctly and thoroughly; the work is scientific and exact in the highest degree, and is yet so popular in its style as to commend it to every thoughtful young student. Mr. Coultas is a high authority on zoological matters, and this volume is well worthy of him.

Sacred Heroes and Martyrs. By J. T. Headley. (London: Ward, Lock, and Tyler.) These biographical sketches are deserving of our warmest commendation. Written as a narrative, in ordinary language, they are well calculated to be read with avidity by many to whom the Bible—so far as thorough study is concerned—is comparatively unknown. The author very happily shows the grandeur of the character of his heroes from even a human standpoint; and then, with great catholicity, introduces the moral and religious lessons to be derived therefrom. The article upon the life of our Saviour is especially good.

The Footsteps of St. Peter. By Rev. J. R. Macduff, D.D. (London: Nisbet and Co.) Dr. Macduff is a most indefatigable writer, and this, his last book, evinces a careful study of the subject which few men could rival. The history of Peter the Bold is traced from his birth to his martyrdom with great fidelity; not an extraneous point is missed, and the many-sided character of the great apostle is vividly portrayed; in aid of the author's personal researches in the Holy Land rendering the narrative most readable and reliable.

The Seed of the Church. By Mrs. Dickinson. (London: Nisbet and Co.) It seems to us almost a pity that the outside of this book should be so theological and dry in its appearance. The story is graphically told of the trials and victories of a band of Roman Christians in the time of Trajan. The scene, and perhaps the plot are well-worn, but our authors carries us from the first page to the last with thrilling excitement, and a power of description absolutely entrancing.

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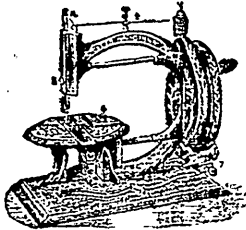
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