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# THE BIBLE

TRUTH, HOLINESS,



# CHRISTIAN

LIBERTY, LOVE.

Vol. V.]

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## THE MORAL WORKING OF A HOUSEHOLD.

BY HORACE BUSHNELL, D. D.

JER. 7; 18. The children gather wood and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger.

In this lively picture, you have the illustration of a great and momentous truth—the *Organic Unity of the Family*. If it be an idolatrous family, worshippers of the moon, for example, such is the organic relation of the members, that they are all involved together, and the idol worship is the common act of the house. The children gather wood, the fathers kindle the fire, the women prepare the cakes for an offering, and the queen of heaven receives it, as one that is the joint product of the whole family. The worship is family worship; the god of one is the god of all; the spirit of one the spirit of all.

And so it is with all family transactions and feelings. They implicate ordinarily the whole circle of the house, young and old, male and female, fathers and mothers, sons and daughters. They act together, take a common character, accept the same delusions, practice the same sins and ought, I believe, to be sanctified by a common grace.

Whatever working there is in the house, all work together. If the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead the cakes, the children will gather the wood, and the idol worship will set the whole circle of the house in action. The child being under the law of the parents, they will keep him at work to execute their plans, or their sins, as the case may be; and, as they will seldom think of what they do, or require, so he will seldom have any scruple concerning it. The property gained belongs to the family. They have a common interest and every prejudice, or animosity, felt by the parents, the children are sure to feel even more intensely. They are all locked together, in one cause—in common cares, hopes, offices and duties; for their honor and dishonor, their sustenance, their ambition, all their objects are common. So they are trained of necessity to a kind of general working, or co-operation, and, like stones rolled together in some brook or eddy, they wear each other into common shapes. If the family subsist by plunder, then the infant is swaddled as a thief, the child wears a thief's garments and feeds the growth of his body on stolen meat; and, in due time, he will have the trade upon him, without ever knowing that he has taken it up, or when he took it up. If the father is intemperate, the children must go on errands to procure his supplies, lose the shame that might be their safety, be immersed in the fumes of liquor; in going and coming, and why not rewarded by an occasional taste of what is so essential to the enjoyment of life? If the family subsist in idleness and beggary, then the children will be trained to lie skillfully and maintain their false pretences with a plausible effrontery—all this, you will observe, not as a sin, but as a trade.

Nor does what I am saying hold, only in cases of extreme viciousness and depravity. Whatever fire the fathers kindle, the children are always found gathering the wood—always helping as accessaries and apprentices. If the father reads a newspaper, or a sporting gazette on Sunday, the family must help him find it. If he writes a letter of business on Sunday, he will send his child to the office with the letter. If the mother is a scandal-monger, she will make her children spies and eaves-droppers. If she sends word to her servant to say, at the door, she is not at home, she will sometimes send it by her child. If she is ambitious that her children should excel in a display of finery and fashion, they must wear the show and grow up in the spirit of it. If her house is a den of disorder and filth, they must be at home in it. Fretfulness and ill-temper in the parents are provocations and, therefore, somewhat more efficacious than commandments to the same. The proper result will be a congenial assem-

blage, in the house, of petulance and ill nature. The niggardly parsimony, that quarrels with a child, when asking for a book needful for his proficiency at school, is teaching him that money is worth more than knowledge. If the parents are late risers, the children must not disturb the house, but stay quiet and take a lesson, that is to assist their energy and promptness, in the future business of life. If they go to church only half of the day, they will not send their children the other half. If they never read the bible, they will never teach it. If they laugh at religion, they will put a face upon it, which will make their children justify the contempt they express. This enumeration might be indefinitely extended. Enough that we see, in the working of the house, how all the members work together. The children fall into their places naturally, as it were, and unconsciously, to do and to suffer exactly what the general scheme of the house requires. Without any design to that effect, all the actings of business, pleasure and sin, propagate themselves throughout the circle, as the weights of a clock maintain the working of the wheels. Where there is no effort to teach wrong or thought of it, the house is yet a school of wrong, and the life of the house is only a practical drill in evil.

## A CHAPTER ON PREACHING.

BY HENRY WARE, JUN., D. D.

A reflecting Christian often wonders at the apparently trifling efficacy of religious institutions; he perplexes himself to comprehend how it is that such multitudes hear preaching, and yet so few profit by it. A yet greater wonder is it at times, that he himself should be so little the better for his attendance on services, of whose value he thinks himself deeply sensible. The minister occasionally tries to explain the matter in a sermon; but his explanation is only partially satisfactory; what seem to him the chief causes do not appear such to men in more exposed walks of life, and the speculations of different active men on the subject differ as much as their various personal experience. Some ascribe it to the weakness of the preachers, and some to the inattention of the hearers; some to internal and some to external causes; and many, in striving to satisfy their minds on the point, forget to keep a watch over the only causes which are of any moment to themselves.

It is not strange therefore, that when Mr. Herton had preached a sermon from the text, "The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard," there was a good deal of speculation among his hearers as to the justness of his views. Some thought that he refined too much, some that he was not sufficiently discriminating, some that he made too much of faith, some that he was not sufficiently practical, and some that he did not make allowance for the hindrances which the world throws in the way of piety. So they began at the church door, and as the several parties separated on their way home, they carried on the discussion. If it be one aim of a preacher to make people think, he certainly had hit the mark that once at least.

As no one in the parish lived further from church than David Ellington, it happened that those who walked the same road with him, kept up the discourse during the whole distance; and he had an opportunity to hear opinions on all the different points that were started. When this had been done and neighbour after neighbour had dropped away each at his own threshold, Jane turned to her husband, and said, "So,—if we may trust what we have been hearing on all sides, preaching does no good, and yet nobody is to blame for it."

"Except the minister," replied David.

"Nay," said his wife, "even Dr. Pillerton, who spoke most harshly, acknowledged

that, after all, the preacher does enough to be the making of any man who would take heed to his words. So that, for aught I see, the minister also is free from blame, like every body else; and we have only to wonder how this dreadful waste of religious influences is to be accounted for."

"And yet meantime nothing is more easily accounted for, if you will take it up in single cases and examine them one by one. Men are puzzled, because they want to see through all Christendom at once; but they will find there is no puzzle at all, if they will just sit down and each decide his own case. Describe to me any man's life, and I will tell you at once why it is that preaching does him no good."

While he was saying this, neighbour Smith, who had been walking ahead of our carpenter and his family, and now that none else was in their company desired to join himself to them, had turned back and caught the last sentence. He too had evidently been musing on the topic of the day, and gave vent to his feelings by exclaiming bitterly, "I don't believe that it does anybody any good."

"Why, Mr. Smith," exclaimed Jane, "you speak as if you had received a personal affront."

"Then I am sure I ask pardon," said John; "I spoke quick, to be sure, because I had been trying to make it out straight all the way, and I can't do it. I don't see why preaching should not do good, and yet I'm sure it never did any good to me, and I do not see it does much good any where. Now take this very town and go over it from one end to the other, and count the people on your fingers, and consider—"

David interrupted him. "That's the very reason you get so puzzled; you undertake too much; you would explain the case of a thousand people at once, when perhaps you are hardly able to explain one. Let us take one at a time. Let us begin with John Smith; and when we understand his case, we will go to his next neighbour, David Ellington, and sift him; and so on, from door to door."

"Well," said John, "it's chiefly my own case that I care about, and that makes me feel so bad. I don't know that all the sermons I ever heard have done me the least good in the world."

"Very well;—now the question is, why? Is it because the sermons were poor and unable to do good?"

"I cannot say that of all of them; some poor preaching I have heard, and I have heard some very fine preaching that was worse than the poor; but on the whole, there has been more that was good. And that in fact makes the difficulty;—sermons are very excellent, for the most part, very,—and yet they don't make me any better."

"Then we must seek another cause. I had a neighbour once, who possessed a comfortable house, and a capital lot of ground to till—orchard, mowing ground, cattle, and a wife who was an admirable dairy-woman. There was not a man in the town with a better opportunity to lead a thrifty, forehanded, prosperous life. What was the reason that he did not? People wondered, when they looked at his fine farm, why in the world it was that the poor man was always behind-hand and going down hill. What was the reason? It could not be the farm—what was it?"

John did not answer, for he more than suspected that his friend was beginning to make a parable out of his own history.

"No," continued David, "it was not the farm that was in fault, but the farmer; he did not use his opportunities, he neglected his land, he lounged about doing nothing, and talked, and smoked, and drank; and as he grew poorer every year, he kept wondering how it could be, that so fine a farm would not support him in plenty and ease."

"He found out at last," whispered John.

"Yes, he found out at last; and then what did he do? He just attended to his business—gave up idle and dissipated habits, and minded his farm; and then he had no difficulty in winning from it a handsome support. Now you are doing with preaching just as you used to do with your farm—neglecting

it; and how in the world can you expect it to do you good? How can you be so foolish as to be surprised you have no grain to reap and no abundance on your board, when you have not sowed the seed, nor tilled the crop?"

"But that is not quite fair," replied John; "I do not neglect preaching; there is not a man in the village more constant at meeting than I am."

"Just as you used to live on your farm,—always at home, never away from the homestead; but that availed nothing, while you were an idler. And so in this case,—of what use to be at church, if you do nothing more? Sitting there and taking into your ears the voice of the preacher, is no better than sitting by your back door and musing on the beauty and fertility of your lands. Nothing can grow up in either case, if this is all you do."

"But that is not all I do."

"Perhaps not quite; you used to go out to work sometimes, and plough and hoe a little, just enough to keep off actual starvation; and about as much as this you do in religion. But suppose you were to make a business of it, as you did of your farm when you took the right turn; suppose you were now to make the most of these religious means, as resolutely as you did of your goodly lands,—do you think you should find reason to complain any longer that you get no good from them?"

They walked on for some moments in silence. John was evidently getting a little new light on the dark subject, which inclined him more to muse than to speak. But he presently felt the silence to be growing awkward, and he therefore broke it, somewhat at a venture, by saying, that after all he did not perceive that he was so very negligent; he could not see but that he did as much as other men.

"As other men!" cried David; "there is the rock on which so many are lost; they compare themselves to 'other men.' But you have already said, that they are not profited by preaching; how then can their case be any guide to you? It only shows how they are lost, not how you may be saved. Look to yourself for the present. One at a time as I said before. Let us settle the case of John Smith, before we undertake any other. And now, to begin at the beginning, let us just remember what preaching is for. Is it to be listened to, or to be practised upon?"

"To be practised upon, certainly."

"Very well; which do you do? You listen; but do not practise?"

"Why, there now," said Smith, "that is the very thing I am lamenting,—that I do listen, and yet my practice is not affected."

"To be sure," said David; "you expect the practice to come of itself; you take pains to go and hear, which is the least part of the business, and take no pains to return and act accordingly, which is the essential thing. You think this is to come of itself; just as you used to fancy that looking at your fine farm, and talking and boasting about it, would do as well as working upon it. You recollect what we were saying the other Saturday evening about the improvement of that season? Well, you acknowledge that it never occurred to you to use it as a preparation for public worship. The same of Sunday morning. Without any preparation, then, you go to church and hear the sermon. How? that you may learn something? that you may receive some wholesome advice? that you may be raised to a better way of living? No, you merely hear. You just sit and listen;—in at one ear and out at the other, as the saying is. Do you think about it afterward, musing on its truths, try to recall and re-impress its doctrine, and turn its advice into real practical rules? I suppose you never pretended to do this. You have not dreamt of anything more, than just to hear the sermon. So it is with thousands; therefore no wonder that they are none the better. It would be a wonder indeed if they were. Why, the plain fact is, neighbour Smith, that you and they are doing all you can to prevent preaching from doing any good. If the devil had hired you to help him defeat

the ordinances of God, you could not have contrived a more effectual means. To enter on them without preparation, to attend them without any purpose or effort of self-application, to think no more of them afterward, and to spend the rest of the day in visiting, talking, eating, riding or thinking just as on any other day,—all this seems as if expressly designed, a careful plot, to destroy the impressions of God's house, and to prevent the two hours of worship from interrupting the dominion of earth in the soul."

"That's rather a long sermon, husband," said Jane.

"And a pretty close one, too," added Smith, soberly. "But it is all true, every word of it. Yet I do not see how I can help it. What can I do? what shall I do?"

"I can tell you what rules helped me," replied David, "and I dare say that by observing them you will find yourself essentially benefited. Will you try?"

"Let me hear them, and I will tell you."

"They are three. First listen to the preacher religiously; that is, in a devout frame of mind; as if you had just said your prayers, and were holding out your hand to receive the blessing you had asked. Secondly, apply it to yourself all along; say Amen to every truth, and say Yes, I will, to every good advice. This will excite a strong interest in the matter. Thirdly, think it over afterward: don't go at once about other things and forget it all, but retire by yourself, and recall what you heard and felt; consider what you ought to do in consequence; and lay out a distinct plan of doing accordingly during the week. Then make it a regular part of every day's business to think over and act upon that particular lesson, and so mix it up with all your prayers and all your work. Follow these rules, and you never will say again that preaching does no good."

"I believe so," said Smith; and I will try them. But I am afraid I never shall have resolution enough to succeed."

"Do it in faith, nothing doubting;—or if you doubt yourself, do not doubt God, but pray for his blessing till you receive it."

They had for some time reached David's house, and were pausing at the gate to finish their discourse. As they now turned away to separate, Smith stopped and cried out, "One word more, neighbour; pray tell me if you observe these rules yourself."

David hesitated a moment, and then, with an expression of countenance that was half sadness and half a smile, he said, "The question is a very fair one, though I do not see that the answer can affect the goodness of the rules."

"But then I shall have the more courage to undertake them, if I find that they are real things, and not mere words."

"Very well; I told you that they had helped me; and they have, unspeakably;—but I do not live up to them fully,—I do not fully live up to any of my good purposes. But this I can tell you, solemnly,—that it is only by living by them that I ever gained anything, and I have always found myself a loser, just in proportion as I have slighted them."

CREEDS AND FORMULAS OF FAITH.

[From the French of M. Coquerel, as translated in the Irish Unitarian Magazine.]

The last point in our Confession of Faith which remains to be explained and defended, concerns our views respecting compulsory Creeds and articles of belief, those sandy foundations upon which the Protestant church has attempted to rest the fabric of her faith, and which have ever sunk beneath the weight of the edifice erected upon them. We shall merely direct attention to a few considerations which are connected with the religious view of the subject, and which go to show the futility of the charge, "that the interests of peace and truth will be compromised, unless a prescribed list of dogmas forms a sanitary cordon around the church."—In fact, the interests of truth and peace are always put forward as the two leading arguments in favor of such Confessions. "Without such formulas without a pledge on the part of her members to adhere to such, the church," say such logicians, "would be at the mercy of every wind of doctrine, and the faith of her adherents, as well as the teachings of her pastors, would be ever in a state of anarchy. There would be every where alarm, every where confusion, and the sounds of division and dispute be heard on every hand. Faith would be uncertain, peace still more precarious, there would be no rallying point for believers, and the people would be scattered abroad like sheep not having a shepherd." Now this seems to us to amount to saying that the great shepherd of souls has prepared an ill-fenced fold for his flock, and, notwithstanding his promises, has left them wandering and dispersed: because it is certain that in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, which we receive as complete and sufficient,

there is no Confession of Faith prescribed, nor anything resembling one. If a Confession of Faith be indispensable to secure agreement of heart and mind, if the "unity of the Spirit," cannot be preserved "in the bond of peace" unless this "bond" be a compulsory creed, it remains to be explained how it happens, that the gospel contains no such creed. Those who advocate an authoritative control over the consciences of believers can never meet this difficulty. What! are we to believe that Jesus came to bring peace upon the earth and that he neglected the only means of securing it in his church! Are we to believe that the Prince of Peace has descended to Heaven and neglected to establish peace in the religious world upon safe and solid foundations! Are we to believe that the Savior left his work to be completed by the theologians of Augsburg or Rochelle, of Westminster or Dort! No! we have more respect for the Word of God than to believe these things. We have more humble trust in the gospel of Christ. We receive and cherish it as he gave it to the world, and we will not consent to substitute another gospel for the gift of our Lord. Our Master has said, "By this sign shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." And if love is the badge of the Christian, and no means exist of recognizing this badge but by referring to the note book of some creed, would not the Master himself have supplied the reference? A Confession of Faith is a supplement added to the gospel. We do not believe that the peace of the Christian world requires human genius to add an appendix to the work of the Holy Spirit!

The entire history of the church from the Council of Nice to the Synod of Dort, pleads in favor of our views of religious liberty. When the editors of the Montpellier "Recueil" affirm in their preface, that Confessions of Faith are "bonds of peace," they forget that the most violent and savage controversies which have distracted the Christian world both before and since the Reformation, have owed their origin to these very "bonds of peace," which have been really declarations of war, edicts of proscription, and charters of sectarianism. They forget too, that in every case the immediate result of an exercise of arbitrary power, in decreeing a particular faith, is to create a Remonstrant church side by side with the established one.

The Reformation was but a remonstrance against the faith decreed by Rome, and the flourishing, enlightened and pious Congregations of Remonstrants in Holland, are protests against the decrees of Dort. Whether the theatre of action be large or small, erected on the banks of the Tiber or the borders of the Meuse, whether the performers be clothed in the scarlet robes of the sacred college or the black gown of the Protestant synod, the catastrophe is the same. There is the same assumption of ecclesiastical authority on one side, and the same resistance in defence of Christian liberty on the other; the same questions have again and again to be resolved, "Shall another believe for me, or shall I believe for myself? Is the Bible to be freely interpreted, or its meaning determined by a synodical decree?"

The interests of the Christian faith also, far from being served, are, like those of Christian peace, gravely compromised by compulsory confessions. The editors of the Montpellier "Recueil" complaisantly specify five species of confusions which prevail in a church not protected by such confessions;—those which distract the Preachers, the Divines, the lay Members of the church, those which divide the church and the state, and those which prevail on the part of the Free Church and the Churches which impose a creed. Now we ask, have compulsory confessions saved the Christian world from such distractions? Germany and the North of Europe, France, Switzerland, Holland and England, all have had creeds as compulsory as the most ardent ecclesiastical authority could desire. Do these nations owe to such organizations the blessings of religious peace? The United States are beyond all comparison the country where, in the present day, compulsory creeds serve most stringently to guard the church for their adherents, and protect it against intruders; and yet this is the country where the greatest diversity of doctrine prevails, where congregations are the most divided, where controversy is the most violent and noisy. Such are the services which compulsory confessions have rendered to Christian faith; these are the sad evidences of history, of ecclesiastical history! We regard the authors of such confessions as discharging in the religious world the functions of the ancient heralds. No doubt these feudal officers were at times employed to announce a peace, but their ordinary duties were to mark out the lists, to open the barriers and to sound the charge.

We may here repeat the remarks we have already made in reference to the Holy Scriptures when speaking of Christian peace. If a formula of doctrines were necessary for the interests of Christian truth, we should find one in the gospel. But there is nothing of the kind; so far from it, no two things can be more

different than the gospel and a confession of faith. One is evidently human, the other is evidently divine. If the reader of the New Testament attentively examines the mode in which the truth is there announced, notes the style, and attends to the manner of expression of the various writers, he will inevitably arrive at the conclusion that nothing can be more detrimental to the truth, than to encase it in the coffers of creeds; that, narrower than her dimensions require, they crush her form as with an iron vice, and well nigh strangle her in their efforts to reduce her form to their capacity. The New Testament is precise, distinct, authoritative in its declarations; grand, poetic and free in its style; the living acting body, fresh from the Creator's hand; human creeds are like uncoffined skeletons, falling rapidly to dust—and dust serves no other purpose than to blind.

Compulsory confessions are also irreconcilable with the fundamental principle of Protestantism—Freedom of examination. It is miserable inconsistency to call one's self a Protestant, that is to lay claim to religious liberty, and at the same moment to sign a Confession of Faith, which is fettering liberty and conscience for all future time: The very act of signing such confessions is an admission of their human origin. No one ever dreams of signing the New Testament.—That bears Christ's signature alone. They only sign human engagements.

We may be told that the Reformers to whom we owe religious independence, were the first to succumb to a compulsory creed. No doubt of it—but herein they were inconsistent. Even Luther himself entertained different sentiments at different times respecting the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. The advocates of creeds would have required from him as many signatures as he entertained opinions! Let the flames which consumed Servetus proclaim in hideous characters how unhappily just is the charge of inconsistency to which we have alluded. The Catholics who condemned him at Vienne erred but in one respect, Calvin doubly erred. Protestants and Romanists agreed upon the sentence, but there was this difference between the judges,—the Catholic was alone consistent.

Irreconcilable with Protestant liberty, compulsory creeds are also opposed to another essential principle of Protestantism—progress. We know how distasteful this word is to many, and what specious arguments its use will furnish to those who attack our principles "You wish then," they will say, "to improve Christianity, to perfect revelation, to elevate what is already divine." By no means. Our object is to improve Christians, not Christianity. To enlarge their knowledge of the gospel, not to perfect what is already complete. Our opinion is, that the interpretation of the holy Scriptures adopted by many Christians sects may be improved.—We hope for instance that we may yet bring many to see with us that notwithstanding the assertion of creeds, it cannot be right to believe that infants may be damned before they are born, and we contend that by placing their signatures to such a doctrine as this, Christians are foes to progress. It is a melancholy and may be a perilous task to decide between the signature of yesterday and the conviction of to-day! Our view of the subject under this aspect is singularly confirmed by the declaration of the first compilers of our Protestant Confession; they begin their preface by saying, "These pages set forth our own faith, and also show how the points at present in controversy have been before time understood and explained." The early Reformers then, whose words I here quote, engaged to set forth and maintain their opinions only. We ask for the same liberty, and by demanding it we believe we show ourselves their legitimate successors.

THE BEST FORTUNE.

BY JOSEPH BARKER.

The best fortune that a parent can leave to his children is a good education. It is very little that money can do for children. If we could leave them as rich as the wealthiest in the land, their riches could not make them happy.

We cannot even keep them from want, by leaving them money. Riches are amongst the most unstable things in the world; the winds themselves are scarcely more unsettled. Many of the poorest creatures in the country are the descendants of wealthy families. The children of wealthy parents are going down into wretchedness every day. Riches are perpetually making themselves wings, and flying away as an eagle toward heaven.

I may be told that there are ways to secure property to children, so as to make it impossible for them to make it away. I know there are ways to keep property in families, but this will not secure those to whom it is left from want. They cannot sell their

houses, perhaps; but they can sell their rents. They cannot make away their income; but they can spend it before it is due. They can run into debt, and they can run into prison, however certain their income may be. They can plunge themselves so deep into debt, and strip themselves so bare of credit, that with the largest estate in the country they shall be unable to keep house, or to remain at large in their own country. Some of the richest of our countrymen are obliged to live in exile, while their estates and habitations are in the hands of others.

I know that property may be made a means of usefulness, if those who have it are wise and good; but it is very difficult to bring people to be wise and good, when they are surrounded from their youth with the temptations of wealth. It is not so easy to get them to learn, when they know that they are entitled to great property. They are prone to think that money will do all things, and so they neglect to acquire knowledge. Money often makes youths proud and unruly, and places them above their teachers. It makes some effeminate, so that learning is too severe a discipline for them. It makes some profligate, so that they give themselves to sensual indulgences, till they have neither time nor taste for the pursuits of science. It makes many forget God, and neglect prayer, and shrink from the duties of a holy life, till they are alienated from all that is good, and made slaves to the vilest lusts and the most ruinous delusions. And when this is the case, their money becomes a curse to them; it is their torment while they live, and it hangs like a millstone round their necks when they die.

Children that have no prospect of wealth, escape these dangers. I know there are some disadvantages of another kind to which they are exposed; but they are not so serious as those which attend on wealth. The hardships of poverty make the labours of study a recreation. Children that have no more than their daily bread, have nothing to make them haughty, or to set them above their teachers. Their teachers have no temptations to grant them dangerous indulgences. They are not afraid of showing them their errors, of reforming their slowness, or of correcting their waywardness. Poor children find no hardships in the discipline of wisdom, but such as they are accustomed to daily.—Their plain food, their rough treatment, and their early toils, accustom them to bear unpleasant things; and when they meet with vexations in the pursuit of wisdom, they consider it no strange thing.

And poverty is more friendly to the cultivation of religion than wealth. The poor were the first that embraced the religion of Christ, and the disciples of Christ have always come chiefly from among the poor.—And religion is in all respects the most important part of a good education. No education is right, of which religion does not form the leading part; no man can be said to be properly educated at all, who has not been brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

And when you have been enabled not only to give a youth instruction in common learning, but to bring him to love and serve his God, you have given him a fortune indeed; you have given him that which surpasses in worth all the riches and distinctions in the world.

You have given him a fortune which will not soon leave him. Men may rob a man of his money, but it is not so easy to rob him of his knowledge and piety. The crafty may cheat a man of his wealth; the importunate may drag it from him; or a thief or a sudden disaster may take it away; but knowledge and piety are secure from these dangers.—Men cannot cheat us of our wisdom; the very attempts they make to beguile us, make us more wise. They cannot take it away by importunity; for the more we give the more we have remaining. And those disastrous floods, and fires, and tempests, which consume men's dwellings, sweep away the produce of our fields, or sink the treasures of the merchant in the deep, can do no mischief to the good man's treasuries of knowledge and religion.

Those events which take away the riches of the worldling, increase the riches of those who place their wealth in knowledge and piety. Even death itself, which strips the earthly man of all things, and commits him naked to the dust, brings the wise and godly man to the possession of all the treasures of heaven.

The riches of the mind make a man rich indeed. They give true happiness. The more a man seeks happiness in money, the more he is convinced of its vanity; but the more a man seeks happiness in religion, and the better he is satisfied. It meets all his wants, and it suits all changes of circumstances. It sweetens his pleasures, and it alleviates his cares. It gives comfort at home, and it cheers him abroad. It lightens his labors by day, and it sweetens his rest by night. It makes health a double blessing, and it

makes sickness work for our good. It increases the pleasures of society, and it cheers the hours of solitude. It makes life joyful,—it makes death peaceful, and it gives eternal delights in heaven.

Not only is a good education better than wealth, but it often secures wealth. Thousands in our land are at this moment abounding in wealth, who if it had not been for a religious education, would have been poor as beggars. And thousands more, who are not possessed of great riches have, through the blessing of God on their good education, obtained a full share of all the enjoyments of life.

And a good education teaches men to make a good use of their riches. When riches are in the hands of ignorant and ungodly men, they often become a scourge. They make the owners miserable, and they make them troublers of their neighbours. But knowledge and religion teach men to use riches in such a way, as to make them blessings to themselves, and blessings to the world.

### UNITARIANISM.

Considering how very superficially all subjects, especially religious subjects, which require any reach or comprehension of thought, are wont to be viewed by the great mass of those to whom they are presented, it is no matter of surprise that liberal Christianity has been misapprehended in every possible manner. From the freedom and fearlessness of its character alone, it is calculated to raise up such clouds and hosts of alarms, misgivings, and prejudices, that its features and designs are almost necessarily distorted to the view of common beholders. Few will approach sufficiently near to it to form a right judgment of its features, and the greater number make a merit of keeping at so great a distance from it, that they must needs be deluded. Because it comes out and denies the truth of certain doctrines, which for centuries have been generally received as fundamental and essential doctrines of Christianity, it is charged with the denial of Christianity itself; and this charge is made by two very different parties, the one regarding unbelief with horror, and the other beholding it with approbation, but both uniting in this point, perhaps, that they wish the charge to prove well founded, because the former party would thus gain a victory, and the latter an accession of strength and respectability. One fact is confirmed to us by this state of things, which is, that the doctrines to which we just now alluded, and which we regard as the corruptions of our religion, such as the imputation of Adam's sin, the Trinity, and the popular scheme of the atonement, have been so intertwined and incorporated with the Christian system, that they have been esteemed, in almost universal opinion, as one and the same thing, with that system. This is just what we have always asserted. We have always asserted that the world in general had little idea of Christianity, as separate from those doctrines, and that this was one of the main reasons why they who could not believe the doctrines rejected Christianity. They thought that in disbelieving the former, they did in fact reject the latter. It is in perfect accordance, therefore, with this prevalent, though extremely erroneous notion, that we, who have discarded those doctrines, which we conceive to be gross misconceptions of Christianity, have been accused of an utter want of faith, and suspected of a corresponding laxity of principle. Men without faith and without principle, often remain in professed communion with a popular and lucrative establishment, the creed of which they silently condemn, but they do not voluntarily bring themselves into trouble by laboring for an unpopular belief, which they equally condemn. The course which we have taken sufficiently proves our seriousness. If we had been infidels, we should either have quietly refrained from touching the least portion of what is generally regarded and revered as Christianity, or we should have cast away the whole. But we have done neither. We have incurred the opprobrium of infidelity, and have been all the while laboring for the great Christian cause. When we determine to give up Christianity, we shall announce it ourselves. Till then, we claim to be believed, when we declare, that it is our reverence for its purity, and our desire for its increased influence alone, which induce us to separate it from those opinions which, in our view, greatly injure it. We are no more to be confounded with unbelievers, than the husbandman, who, with great care and toil, frees from weeds and stones the garden in which is his delight and nourishment, is to be confounded with the wild beasts who rush in and lay waste the beds, and trample down weeds and fruits and flowers in one common ruin. We may be wrong in our views of Christianity; that is certainly within the range of possibilities, but we know we entertain them as friends and not enemies to Chris-

tianity, and that a sincere regard for its honor and truth, and efficacy, is the motive which impels us to declare and diffuse them.

We believe, from abundant evidence both external and internal in the truth of the Scriptures. If we believe that Jesus of Nazareth was sent from God, as the Christian Scriptures say that he was, to announce God's will to men; that he proved the reality of his mission by the performance of miracles which no one could have performed unless God were with him; that he lived a life of spotless purity and virtue, and that after a violent and cruel death he rose from the grave,—if we believe this, and none of our accusers have as yet had the hardihood to charge us with denying it—then the Scriptures have an authority over us which is strictly divine, and consequently of the highest possible character. As soon as we confess that the precepts which appear in the Gospels as those of Jesus, were really uttered by him, and that he was in truth a teacher sent from God, then these precepts become to us the words of God, and of course an absolute rule of conduct. As soon as we acknowledge that the character of Jesus is accurately delineated by the evangelists, as honest historians, that moment does his example become our professed guide to virtue, happiness, and heaven. And we would now simply ask, whether, if a man receives the precepts of Jesus as truly divine commandments, and the life of Jesus as the model of his own, he could by any effort of faith or imagination, attribute a higher and more effectual authority to the writings which propose these commandments and that model? We ask, whether obeying Christ as an instructor and law-giver, sent to him by their common Father and God, he is not in the way of being a good Christian? We ask, whether he deserves to be called an infidel?

We believe in one only God, the self-existent Creator, and worship him alone; we revere, we love his Son Jesus Christ, and would observe his precepts, and enjoin others to observe them, as the word of God, and the way to God. If this faith is not serious, we are not yet acquainted with the signification of that term.

The single word, *life*, includes within its meaning much doctrine, and may serve as a test of moral opinions. What, then, do we think of life, of human, mortal life? We certainly do not look upon it as a sporting time, which may be wasted in the pursuit of amusements and trifles, or a grieving time which may be consumed in sadness and tears, but as a season of mental and moral advancement, of usefulness, of discipline, of preparation for a future state. We believe that of this our life God is the giver and upholder; that it is passed under his all-searching and perpetual sight; that he beholds what is good in us with complacency, and what is weak with pity, and what is evil with displeasure, and that he will reward the first, and assist the second, and punish the last.

Like others we are to die. With the faith which we entertain, this knowledge cannot make us gloomy, but we cannot be, in the view of so certain and momentous an event, reckless or heedless, or teach others to be so. We regard death as a change, a solemn one; and a change for which the manner of our life, its duty, and its piety, ought to make us at all times ready.

After death comes the judgment. Are we not to be judged? We believe that we are, and that we must render an account, and take the consequences of every action of our lives. Believing this, is it probable, is it possible, that we can be so palpably, so sadly inconsistent, as to be licentious in faith or practice, or induce others so to be? Is it possible that we can intentionally undervalue God's word, dishonor his Son, and trifle with his commandments; when we believe that we are soon to be summoned to our account before his judgment seat? Are we to be suspected of playing the fool and the madman at this astonishing rate? No; if our creed contained but this one article; if all that we believed, was, that we were to be judged by an Almighty and Holy God, according to the deeds done in the body, that single article ought to be sufficient to secure us against the charge of a want of seriousness.—*Greenwood.*

Prayer was not invented; it was born with the first sigh, the first joy, the first sorrow of the human heart; or rather, man was born to pray; to glorify God, or to implore him, was his only mission here below; all else perishes before him or with him; but the cry of glory, of admiration, or of love, which he raises towards the Creator, does not perish on his passing from the earth; it re-ascends, it resounds from age to age in the ear of the Almighty, like the reflection of his own magnificence. It is the only thing in man which is wholly divine, and which he can exhale with joy and pride. It is an homage to him to whom homage alone is due—the Infinite Being.—*Lamarline.*

## The Bible Christian.

MONTREAL, SEPTEMBER, 1848.

### PROTESTANTISM.

Strange things sometimes turn up by mere accident. As we were turning over a pile of old pamphlets and papers, a few days since, we met with a supplement to the "Church" newspaper, containing a charge or rather a portion of a charge (for the first eight sections are not in the supplement) "delivered to the clergy of the Diocese of Toronto, at the Triennial Visitation, held in the Cathedral Church of St. James, Toronto, on the 6th June, 1844, by the Honourable and Right Reverend John Strachan, D. D., Lord Bishop of Toronto." The first thing that struck us on looking at this document was the title, from which it appears very plainly that our Episcopal friends attach some importance to a name. Dr. Strachan evidently designs to amaze the simple people of this simple Province by his prodigious prefix and affix. An "Honourable and Right Reverend" "Lord Bishop" is not to be thought lightly of by the vulgar. Some, we know, regard the use of such titles in this country as an unauthorised assumption. For our own part we like brief modes of address, and our objection, therefore, would be mainly on account of their length. That the Episcopal Church in Canada has shown itself ready to put forth most arrogant pretensions is obvious to all. We regret this, because it brings essential injury to the proper Christianity of a country. All arrogance is contrary to the Gospel Spirit, and when exercised by one sect or party, has the effect of stirring up resistance in the others. Hence so many miserable religious broils, bringing the very name of religion into disrepute.

In the ninth section the Bishop enters with all due gravity upon the "surplice question." "In riding from place to place, it is very inconvenient [for the clergymen] to carry about with them both a surplice and a gown." So says the Bishop. He admits the fact of the inconvenience, and what is better, he makes up his mind to submit to it, and proceeds to "charge" accordingly. He "recommends the preference of the first to the second"—that is, of the surplice to the gown—"when both cannot be had." And this recommendation is not hastily or thoughtlessly given—it is not given without book. Thus he reasons—"because the surplice ought to be used on all occasions, except when preaching, and even then the authorities are divided, and, therefore, its use can at no time be improper." As we would not for the world do ought to disturb the even tenor of this solemn argument without proper notice, we think it right to state the italics are our own. Under the circumstances given, then, Dr. Strachan recommends the surplice. It is curious to observe how very differently different minds will view the same subject. Our recommendation in such a case would be entirely the other way. Not having studied "the authorities" (from which, however, there is probably not much to be gained; since they "are divided") we, in our simplicity, should argue somewhat after this fashion. The surplice is white, and the gown is black. Now it is universally known and admitted, that a white garment is more readily soiled than a black one. Therefore, to save yourselves and your laundresses trouble, leave the surplice at home, and put the gown in your travelling bag. But nature never intended us for a "Lord Bishop of Toronto." That is quite clear.

If the excellence of one section, however, can redeem the puerilities of another, we should be disposed to say that the remarks on preaching in the tenth, amply atone for those on the surplice in the ninth. "Faith and practice," he says, "are never separated in the Scriptures." "We should so preach the doctrines as to make them bear upon practice, and the practice as intimately connected with, and flowing from, the doctrines." "Frequent and earnest appeals to the practical precepts of the gospel must be made; minute descriptions of temper brought home,

and special expositions of the personal and social duties urged at one time by the most endearing, and at another by the most alarming motives." "We should avoid abstract and technical views, either of doctrine or duty, because they are apt to perplex our hearers, to chill their best feelings and make them think that religion is a business altogether separate from the occupations of life, and has little in common with human pursuits, hopes, and fears, but is unsocial and repulsive, narrow and forbidding. Such preaching can lead to no practical good. How much better to teach heavenly-mindedness and purity of heart, and that our religion, as taught by the Apostles, adapts itself to all the circumstances of life, and is a religion of love, sobriety, moderation, temperance and justice, giving a promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come." Such remarks as these are very worthy the attention of every preacher, whether Episcopal or non-Episcopal.

But it is not our intention to enter on a review of the Bishop's Charge. For such a task we have neither time nor taste just now. We took up the pen to notice a statement which appears in the twentieth section, and which involves a question touching the very nature of Protestantism. "The Church of England," he says, "has never recognised, much less maintained, the unqualified right of private judgment, in matters of religion." "Unlimited private judgment in religious matters is not the doctrine of the Reformation, nor of the Church of Christ in any age; for if the Bible were to be believed according to every man's interpretation, there could be no such thing as heresy or erroneous doctrine. Again, the Bible as explained by every man's private judgment or opinion is not the doctrine of Protestants. For one reads the Bible without any knowledge of the original language, or any help from, or deference to authority, which in all other matters he respects, and he becomes an Arian, or a Socinian, or a Quaker, &c. Private judgment must therefore, in matters of religion, be directed and controlled as our Church directs and controls it, otherwise there could be no such thing as religious error, or heresy, or dissent."

Now, on reading a passage such as the foregoing, the question is suggested. What is Protestantism? We have been accustomed to regard the term as denoting a sacred principle standing in open and distinct opposition to Romanism. Have we been right or wrong? Is such a principle essential to Protestantism, or may the term be legitimately employed to cloak a purely papal spirit? Shall any church, or outward ecclesiastical organization, authoritatively control the individual conscience? Or shall the individual stand free before God, and accountable to him only? These are the fundamental questions at issue between the Romanist and the Protestant. The Papal system asserts authority, and demands submission. The Protestant Reformation took its rise from a denial of the one and a refusal of the other. When Luther nailed his ninety-five theses to the door of Wittenberg Church, his act was at once an assertion of individual right, and a rebellion against authority. Subsequently, at various times and various places—even before the Diet at Worms—he was called on to retract and submit. But standing on his rights as an individual man he refused to do either. His answer always was—"If I am not convinced by proof from Holy Scriptures, or cogent reasons, I neither can nor will retract; for it cannot be right for a Christian to speak against his conscience." In the face of this historical fact we do not see how any one can presume to say that private judgment—"unlimited private judgment in religious matters is not the doctrine of the Reformation." What authority was to satisfy Luther? None, save that of reason and Scripture. And who or what was to determine the point of its application, or the measure of its binding power? Who or what was to determine its decisions? His own judgment. His own private judgment, unlimited and unshackled. Unless his mind was legitimately convinced by proper argument drawn from those two sources only, he would not yield. He felt that it could not be right for a Christian to give outward acquiescence when his inner conscience was not legitimately satisfied. And he refused to do it. On the strength of his own judgment, he stood alone against the Church.

[To be concluded in our next.]

Poetry.

THE CHILD AND THE MOURNERS

BY CHARLES MACKAY

A LITTLE child beneath a tree  
Sat and chanted cheerily  
A little song, a pleasant song,  
Which was—she sung it all day long—  
“When the wind blows the blossoms fall;  
But a good God reigns over all.”

There passed a lady by the way,  
Meaning in the face of day;  
There were tears upon her cheek,  
Grief in her heart too great to speak;  
Her husband died but yester-morn,  
And left her in the world forlorn.

She stopped and listened to the child  
That looked to heaven, and singing, smiled;  
And saw not for, her own despair—  
Another lady, young and fair,  
Who also passing, stopped to hear  
The infant's anthem ringing clear.

For she, but few and days before,  
Had lost the little babe she bore;  
And grief was heavy at her soul—  
As that sweet memory o'er her stole,  
And showed how bright had been the Past:  
The Present drear and overcast.

And has they stood beneath the tree  
Listening, soothed and placidly,  
A youth came by, whose sunken eyes  
Spoke of a load of miseries;  
And he, arrested, like the twain,  
Stopped to listen to the strain.

Death had bowed the youthful head  
Of his bride beloved, his bride unwed:  
Her marriage robes were fitted on;  
Her fair young face with blushes shone;  
When the destroyer smote her low,  
And changed the lover's bliss to woe.

And these three listened to the song,  
Silver-toned, and sweet, and strong,  
Which that child, the livelong day  
Chanted to itself, in play;  
“When the wind blows the blossoms fall;  
But a good God reigns over all.”

The widow's lips impulsive moved;  
The mother's grief though unapproved,  
Softened, as her trembling tongue  
Repeated what the infant sung;  
And the sad lover, with a start,  
Conced it over to his heart.

And though the child—if child it were,  
And not a seraph sitting there—  
Was seen no more, the sorrowing three  
Went on their way resignedly,  
The song still ringing in their ears—  
Was it music of the spheres?

Who shall tell? They did not know,  
But in the midst of deepest woe  
The strains recurred when sorrow grew,  
To warm them, and console them, to—  
“When the wind blows the blossoms fall,  
But a good God reigns over all.”

LETTERS FROM THE HON. JOHN QUINCY ADAMS TO HIS SON, ON THE BIBLE AND ITS TEACHINGS.

LETTER VIII.

The whole system of Christianity appears to have been set forth by its Divine Author in his sermon on the Mount, recorded in the 5th, 6th, and 7th chapters of Mathew. I intend hereafter to make them the subject of remarks much more at large; for the present I confine myself merely to general views. What I would impress upon your mind as infinitely important to the happiness and virtue of your life, is, the general spirit of Christianity and the duties which result from it. In my last letter, I showed you, from the very words of our Savior, that He commanded His disciples to aim at absolute perfection, and that this perfection consisted in self-subjugation and brotherly love, in the complete conquest of our own passions, and in the practice of benevolence to our fellow-creatures. Among the Grecian systems of moral philosophy, that of the Stoics resembles the Christian doctrine in the particular of requiring the total subjugation of the passions; and this part of the Stoic principle was adopted by the academies. You will find the question discussed with all the eloquence and ingenuity of Cicero, in the fourth of his Tusculan disputations, which I advised you to read and meditate upon. You will there find proved, the duty of subduing the passions.

It is sometimes objected that this theory is not adapted to the infirmities of human nature; that it is not made for a being so constituted as man; that an earthen vessel is not formed to dash itself against a rock; that in

yielding to the impulses of the passions, man only follows the dictates of his nature; that to subdue them entirely is an effort beyond his powers. The weakness and frailty of our nature, it is not possible to deny—it is too strongly tested by all human experience, as well as by the whole tenor of the Scriptures; but the degree of weakness must be measured by the efforts to overcome it, and not by indulgence to it. Once admit weakness as an argument to forbear exertion, and it results in absolute impotence. It is also very inconclusive reasoning to infer that because perfection is not absolutely to be obtained, it is therefore not to be sought. Human excellence consists in approximation to perfection; and the only means of approaching to any term, is by endeavouring to obtain the term itself. With these convictions upon the mind—with a sincere and honest effort to practice upon them, and with the aid of the divine blessing which is promised to it, approaches to perfection may at least be so great as nearly to answer all the ends which absolute perfection itself could attain. All exertion, therefore, is virtue; and if the tree be judged by its fruit, it is certain that all the most virtuous characters of heathen antiquity were the disciples of the Stoic doctrine. But let it even be admitted that a perfect command of the passions is unattainable to human infirmity, it will still be true that the degree of moral excellence possessed by any individual is in exact proportion to the degree of control he exercises over himself. According to the Stoics, all vice was resolvable into folly; according to the Christian principle, it is all the effect of weakness. In order to preserve the dominion of our own passions, it behooves us to be constantly and strictly on our guard against the influence and infection of the passions of others. This caution above all is necessary to youth; and I deem it indispensable to enjoin it upon you,—because, as kindness and benevolence comprise the whole system of Christian duties, there may be and often is, great danger of falling into errors and vice merely for the want of energy to resist the example or enticement of others.

On this point the true character of Christian morality appears to me to have been misunderstood by some of its ablest and warmest defenders. In Paley's "View of the Evidences of Christianity," there is a chapter on the Morality of the gospel, the general tenor of which (as of the whole work) is excellent, but in which there is the following passage: "there are two opposite descriptions of character, under which mankind may generally be classed: the one possesses vigor, firmness, resolution, is active and daring, quick in its sensibilities, jealous of its fame, eager in its attachments, inflexible of its purposes, violent in its resentment: the other meek, yielding, complying, forgiving, not prompt to act, but willing to suffer, silent and gentle under rudeness and insults, suing for reconciliation where others would demand satisfaction; giving away to the pushes of impudence, conceding and indulgent to the prejudices, the wrong-headedness, the intractability of others with whom it has to deal. The former of these characters is, and ever has been, the favorite of the world; it is the character of great men; there is a dignity in it which commands respect. The latter is poor, spirited, tame and abject. Yet, so it happened, that with the founder of Christianity, the latter is the subject of His commendation, His precepts, His example, and that the former is so in no part of its composition. Dr. Paley in this place adopts the opinion of Soame Jennings, whose essay on the "Internal Evidences of Christianity," he strongly recommends; but I cannot consider it either as an accurate and discerning delineation of character, or as exhibiting a correct representation of christian principles. The founder of christianity did indeed pronounce distinct and positive blessings upon the "poor in spirit," which is by no means synonymous with the "poor spirited;" and upon the meek. But in what part of the gospel did Dr. Paley find Him countenancing by "commendation, by precept or example the tame and abject?" The character which Christ assumed upon earth, was that of a Lord and Master; it was in that character His disciples received and acknowledged Him. The obedience He required was unbounded, infinitely beyond that which was ever claimed by the most absolute earthly sovereign of his subjects; never for one moment did He recede from his authoritative station; He preserved it in washing the feet of His disciples; He preserved it in answer to the officers who struck Him for his very deportment, and to the High Priest; He preserved it in the agony of His ejaculation on the Cross, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." He expressly declared Himself "the Prince of this world, and Son of God." He spoke as one having authority, not only to His disciples, but to His mother, to His judges, to Pilate the Roman Governor, to John the Baptist, His precursor; and there is not in the four gospels, one act, not one word recorded of Him, (excepting His communion with God) that was not a direct, or implied assertion of au-

thority. He said to His disciples, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart," &c., but where did He ever say to them learn of me for I am tame and abject? There is certainly nothing more strongly marked in the precepts and example of Christ, than the principle of stubborn and inflexible resistance against the impulses of others to evil. He taught His disciples to renounce everything that is counted enjoyment upon earth; "to take up their cross;" and to suffer ill treatment, and persecution and death for His sake. What else is the book of the "Acts of the Apostles" than a record of the faithfulness with which these chosen ministers of the gospel carried these injunctions into execution? In the conduct and speeches of Peter, John, and Paul, is there anything that could justly be called "tame or abject?" Is there anything indicating a resemblance to the second class or character into which Dr. Paley divides all mankind. If there is a character upon historical record distinguished by a bold, inflexible, tenacious and intrepid spirit, it is that of Paul. It was to such characters only, that the commission to "teach all nations," could be committed with certainty of success. Observe the impression of Christ, in His charge to Peter; (a rock) And upon this rock will I build my Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Dr. Paley's Christian is one of those drivelers who, to use a vulgar phrase, can never say "No," to anybody.

The true Christian is the "Justum et tenacem propositum virum" of Horace, (the man who is just and steady to his purpose.) The combination of these qualities, so essential to heroic character, with those of meekness, lowliness of heart, and brotherly love, is what constitutes that moral perfection of which Christ gave an example in His own life, and to which He commands His disciples to aspire. Endeavor, my dear son, to discipline your heart, and to govern your conduct by these principles thus combined; be meek, be gentle, be kindly affectionate to all mankind, not excepting your enemies, but never be "tame or abject;" never give way to the pushes of impudence, or show yourself yielding or complying to prejudice, wrong-headedness, or intractability, which would lead or draw you astray from the dictates of your own sense of right: "till you die, let not your integrity depart from you;" build your house upon the rock, and then let the rains descend, and the floods come, and the winds blow and beat upon that house; "it shall not fall, it will be founded upon a rock." So promises your blessed Lord and Master, and so prays your affectionate Father,

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

TRUE VIRTUE.

When I set before me true virtue, all the distinctions on which men value themselves fade away. Wealth is poor; worldly honor is mean; outward forms are beggarly elements. Condition, country, church, all sink into unimportance. Before this simple greatness I bow, reverent. The robed priest, the gorgeous altar, the great assembly, the pealing organ, all the exteriors of religion, vanish from my sight as I look at the good and great man, the holy, disinterested soul. Even I, with vision so dim, with heart so cold, can see and feel the divinity, the grandeur of true goodness. How, then, must God regard it? To his pure eye how lovely must it be! And can any of us turn from it, because some water has not been dropped on its forehead, or some bread put into its lips by a minister or priest? or because it has not learned to repeat some mysterious creed, which a church or human council has ordained?—Channing.

BLESSED BE THE HAND WHICH PREPARES A PLEASURE FOR A CHILD; for there is, no saying where and when it may again bloom forth. Does not almost everybody remember some kind-hearted man who showed him a kindness in the quiet days of his childhood? The writer of this recollects himself at this moment, as a bare-footed lad standing at the wooden fence of a poor little garden, in his native village; with longing eyes he gazed on the flowers which were blooming there quietly in the brightness of a Sunday morning. The possessor of the garden came forth from his little cottage—he was a wood-cutter by trade—and spent the whole week at his work in the woods. He was come into his garden to gather a flower to stick in his coat when he went to church. He saw the boy, and breaking off the most beautiful of his carnations, (it was streaked with red and white,) gave it to him. Neither the giver, nor the receiver spoke one word; and with bounding steps the boy ran home; and now here at a vast distance from that home, after so many events of so many years, the feeling of gratitude which agitated the breast of that boy expresses itself on paper. The carnation is long since withered, but it now blooms afresh.—Douglas Jerrold.

ALWAYS BE ACTIVE.

It is the odds and ends of our time, its orts and offals, laid up, as they usually are, in corners, to rot there, instead of being used out as they should be—these, I say, are the occasions of our moral unsoundness and corruption; a dead fly, little thing as it is, will spoil a whole box of the most precious ointment; and idleness, if it be once suffered, though but for a brief while, is sure, by the communication of its listless quality, to clog and cumber the clockwork of the whole day. It is the ancient enemy,—the old man of the Arabian tales. Once take him upon your shoulders, and he is not to be shaken off so easily. I had a notion of these truths, and I framed my plan after their rules: I resolved that every minute should be occupied by thought, word, or act, or, if none of these, by intention; vacancy was my only outcast, the scapegoat of my proscription. For this my purpose I required a certain energy of will, as, indeed, this same energy is requisite for every good thing of every sort and kind; without it we are as powerless as grubs, noisome as ditch water, vague, loose, and unpredestinate as the clouds above our heads. However, I had sufficient of this energy to serve me for that turn; I felt the excellence of the practice, I was penetrated with it through all my being; I clung to it, I cherished it. I made a point of everything; I was active, brisk, and animated (oh! how true is that word) in all things that I did, even to the picking up of a glove, or asking the time of day. If I ever felt the approach, the first approach, of the insidious languor, I said at once within myself, in the next quarter of an hour I will do such a thing, and, presto, it was done, and much more than that into the bargain; my mind was set in motion, my spirits stirred and quickened, and raised to their proper height.—Self-Formation.

PARENTAL FAITHFULNESS.

There are some trusts which cannot be delegated, some responsibilities which no other being can bear for us, which no other being, I had almost said, can understand. Parental influence, parental watchfulness, God never suffers to be transferred. In the beautiful and holy order of His Providence the work which angels love to see, whose progress heaven rejoices over in the dawning soul, is committed to parents. They may not have time, nor the needed intellect, to fit their child for stepping at once from the fireside into the thick of life, and pursuing with all wisdom the great interests of his worldly being. But why complain, if they have not? Infinitely greater interests are within their legitimate influence, unspeakably nobler concerns of his are entrusted to their care, are determined even by their want of care. In the opening days of life they are to him a present Deity; the word "Father" translates to that young heart all it knows of the Heavenly King. In them he beholds, yes in his very dreams, the path of duty, the sure and shining way of virtue, the ideal of all he prays most fervently to realize. A word, a look, an expression of sadness as if the whole soul was wrung, at the tale of violated faith, the kindling of joy in the countenance, as at the finding of a treasure richer than all the buried hoards of fable, when the story is told of all-subduing patience, all-resisting purity,—most of all, the moments given to free communion with a child upon his immediate duties, the parent's sympathy with his trials, or gladness in his victories over temptation, shall write themselves out again in a gentle, holy life, shall tell without fail upon that tender heart, shall send their "amen" up to heaven from thoughts consecrated in the baptism of the spirit, offered by the priest-ordained of God to make this acceptable sacrifice.

It is painful to think how many parents disregard what are alike the privileges and the responsibilities of their sacred office. And it is little less painful, to see what poor counsels are often given them on this subject.—Here is a book—no matter by whom—in which the mother is exhorted to begin the education of her child with an unhesitating faith in the depravity of his nature, and is charged to inculcate upon him, as the first truth in religion, that he cannot love God except he be the subject of a change reaching to the very constitution of his being!—Thanks be to the Creator, the maternal heart is an overmatch for doctrinal theology. In spite of all the catechism and the creed say the simplicity of childhood, its tender reliance, its innocence, interpret to the loving parent the Saviour's words—"Of such is the kingdom of heaven." If we could only keep men children, there would be no need of conversion in this world of ours.

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Joseph W. Harrison, Printer.