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Mr Robt Rose

THE GOOD NEWS.

A SEMI-MONTHLY PERIODICAL:

DEVOTED to the RELIGIOUS EDUCATION of the OLD AND YOUNG

FIRE IN THE WOODS.

BY REV. NORMAN MACLEOD, D.D.

I can conceive of nothing in this world more awful than one of those fires which have frequently rushed through forests in North America, with more fearful rapidity and destructive fury than any lava-stream that ever poured from the fiercest volcano. The first time I ever saw the traces of such a conflagration was in Nova Scotia, between Halifax and Truro, on the road to Pictou. The driver of the stage—and a better or merrier never mounted a box, or guided a team through mud and over corduroy—pointed me out the spot in which he and his charge had a most narrow escape.—While pursuing his journey along one of these forest roads, ramparted on each side by tall trees that show but a narrow strip of blue sky overhead, he found himself involved in volumes of smoke bursting from the woods. It did not require the experience of an inhabitant of the great Western Continent to reveal to him instantly his terrible position. The woods were on fire! But whether the fire was far off or near, he could not tell. If far off, he knew it was making towards him with the speed of a race-horse; if near, a few minutes must involve him in the conflagration. Suddenly the fire burst before him! It was crossing the road, and forming a canopy overhead; sending long tongues of flame, with wreaths of smoke, from one tree top to another; crackling and roaring as it sped upon its devouring path; licking up the tufted heads of the pines, while the wind whirled

them onwards to extend the conflagration. What was to be done? To retreat was useless. Miles of forest were behind ready to be consumed. There was one hope only of escape. Nathan had heard in the morning a report, that a mill had been burnt. The spot where it had stood was about six hundred yards ahead. He argued, that the fire having been there, and consumed everything, could not again have visited the same place. He determined to make a desperate rush through fire and smoke to reach the clearance. The conflagration was as yet above him like a glowing arch, though it had partially extended to the ground on either side. He had six horses to be sure, tried animals, who knew his voice, and whom he seemed to love as friends; but such a coach!—lumbering and springless, and full of passengers too, chiefly ladies; and such roads!—a combination of trunks of trees buried in thick mud. But on he must go, or perish. Bending his head down, blind, hardly able to breathe, lashing his horses, and shouting to his trembling, terrified creatures, and while the ladies screamed in agony of fear, Nathan went plunging and tossing through the terrific scene! A few minutes more, and there is no hope, for the coach is scorched, and about to take fire; and the horses are getting unmanageable! Another desperate rush—he has reached the clearance, and there is the mill, a mass of charred wood, surrounded by a

forest of ebony trunks growing out of charred earth;—the fire has passed, and Nathan is safe! "Oh! sir," he said, "it was frightful! Think only if a horse had stumbled or fallen! or had the fire caught us farther back!—five minutes more would have done it, sir!" That same fire consumed a space of forest ten miles long, and three broad!

But what was such a fire even, to the memorable one which devastated Miramichi, in New Brunswick, about twenty-five years ago! That terrific conflagration is unparalleled in the history of consumed forests. It broke out on the 7th October, 1825, about sixty miles above the town of Newcastle, at one in the afternoon, and before ~~ten the same night it had~~ reached twenty miles beyond; thus traversing, in nine hours, a distance of eighty miles of forest, with a breath of about twenty-five! Over this great tract of country everything was destroyed; one hundred and sixty persons perished; not a tree was left; the very fish in the streams were scorched and found lying afterwards dead in heaps.

The morning of that dreadful day was calm and sultry; but, in an instant, smoke swept over the town of Newcastle (situated on the river Miramichi), which turned day into night. The darkness was so unexpected—so sudden—so profound—that many cried that the Judgment day had come. But soon the true cause was suspected.—Suspensions were speedily followed by certainty, as the flames were seen bursting through the gloom. Every one made for the river; some got into boats moored near the beach, some on rafts of timber, while others stood in the water. Terrified mothers with their families, decrepit old men and women, and worse than all, the sick and dying, were hurried, in despairing crowds, to the stream, to escape the flames which were already devouring their houses, and making a bonfire of the thriving town. Each succeeding hour added some new horror to the scene. The rarefaction and exhaustion of the air by the intense heat over so great a space, caused, as was supposed, such a rush of cold air from the ocean, that a hurricane rushed in fury along the river, tearing burning trees up by the roots, hurling flaming branches through the air for five or six miles (which set fire to the shipping, and to the woods

on the other side of the broad stream), causing, at the same time, such a rolling sea up the river as threatened to swamp the boats, and sweep the miserable refugees from the rafts! It seems incredible, but we believe there is no doubt as to the fact, that the ashes of the fire fell thick on the streets of Halifax, St. John's Newfoundland, and Quebec; and that some were carried as far as the Bermudas, while the smoke darkened the air hundreds of miles off! That terrible night is fresh in the memory of all who endured its horrors.—One of my informants speaking of it, said, "No language can describe it! I do not think I shall see anything like it again in this world, or until the last day! I was in a druggist's shop, getting medicine for my wife, who was confined to bed with fever. The druggist was pouring a few drops into a phial, when literally, in a twinkling of an eye, it became so dark that he could not see to drop the medicine, and I could not see his face! 'The last day has come!' we both exclaimed. I left the shop to go home; but it was so pitch dark that I could not see the road, and had to walk in the ditch which bordered it. Guided by the paling, and assisted by a friend, I got my wife and children to the river, and placed them on a raft; and what a scene!—what weeping and crying of those whose relations lived in the settlements farther back, and for whom they knew there was now no escape! But there is no use talking about it. No tongue can find words to picture that night! Fire and smoke, wind and water, all spending their utmost fury; the children crying—the timid screaming—the sick in misery—the brave at their wit's end—and all knowing, too, that we had lost many friends, and all our property. I shudder to think of it!"

That fire has left singular traces of its journey. The road from Newcastle to Bathurst, near the Bay of Chaleur, passes for five or six miles through a district called the Barrens. The scene which meets the eye of the traveller is perhaps unequalled. Far as the eye can reach upon every side, there is nothing but desolation. The forest extends, as it has done for ages, across plains, and vanishes over the undulating hills which bound the distant horizon. But while all the trees, with most of their

branches remain, spring extracts no bud from them, nor does summer clothe even a twig with foliage. All is a barren waste! The trees are not black now, but white, and bleached by sun and rain; and far to the horizon, round and round, nothing is discovered but one vast and apparently boundless forest of the white skeleton trunks of dead leafless trees! That immense tract is doomed to remain barren, perhaps, for ever,—at least for many long years to come. It is avoided by the emigrant,—nay, the very birds and wild beasts seem to have for ever deserted it.—The trees would not, in a country of forest, pay the expense of cutting them down for firewood, even were the chopping process of half-burnt trunks less difficult and disagreeable than it is; while the land has become so scourged by the exuberant crop of various plants which grow up in such soil, when cleared by a fire, as to be comparatively useless in a colony of countless acres yet untouched by the plough of the settler.

Though no such fire as that which devastated Miramichi ever visited any of our colonies before or since, yet partial fires are very common. I saw a very respectable Scotch emigrant in Prince Edward's Island, whose house was suddenly caught by one of those dreadful visitations, and two interesting daughters were burnt alive, before their father, who escaped, could warn them of their danger.

It is impossible to dwell upon such scenes without the thought being suggested to the mind of that last conflagration which is to destroy the world (and thereby, perhaps, to usher in a new heaven and a new earth), even as the old world was destroyed by water. This fact in the future history of our world is very clearly revealed: "The world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished; but the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire, against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." And again, "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up!" Many people scoff at this. The coming fire is disbelieved now, as much as the coming

flood was disbelieved in the day of Noah; and so St. Peter foretold when he said, "There shall come scoffers in the last days, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? or, Where is His promised coming?" But God kept His word to the old world, and all perished save one family.—And equally certain it is, that "the heavens and the earth, by the same word, are kept in store for the perdition of ungodly men." It is true, that centuries may pass without any signs of so awful a judgment, and unbelievers begin to think that God "hath forgotten." But "a day with the Lord is as a thousand years!" and "the Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance?" Let us take advantage of our Lord's goodness! If we repent not, it shall be with us as with the old world,—"we shall all likewise perish. How dreadful is a house on fire!—but we may escape to the house of a neighbour. How dreadful is a city on fire!—but we may flee from it to the mountains, and be safe.—How dreadful is a whole country on fire!—but some river, or the ocean, may afford a place of safety. But a world on fire! the elements melting with fervent heat! the earth and the works therein burned up!—whither shall the impenitent and unbelieving fly? To God? Hear, O sinner, His warnings in time!—"When your fear cometh as a desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you; then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: they would none of my counsel; they despised all my reproof: therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices!"—(Prov. i. 27–31.) Shall they fly to Jesus? He also tells them what must be His sentence: "I know you not; depart from me, ye that work iniquity!"

There can be no hope for the impenitent then, but there is hope now. "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." "To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts!" Beware

of giving your hearts to what cannot last or be your life," What can "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, or the pride of life," do for you on that day? But, seeing all these things are to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness? Yet those who know and love Jesus may rejoice. "The world," indeed, "passes away, and the lust thereof." Let it pass; who will mourn over its funeral pile? But all that is worth keeping will be preserved. "He who does the will of God abideth for ever!" While this world is kept in store for the perdition of the ungodly, a better world is reserved for the godly: "Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."—Wherefore, believer, "seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless; and account that the long-suffering of our God is salvation!" And again, "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken, are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him."

RAISING THE DEAD.

The three miracles of raising the dead have always been regarded as the mightiest outcomings of the power of Christ; and with justice. They are those at which unbelief is readiest to stumble, standing, as they do, in a yet more striking contrast than any of the others to all that experience has known. The line between health and sickness is not definitely fixed; and the two conditions melt one into the other, and the transition from this to that is frequent. In like manner storms alternate with calms;

the fiercest tempest allays itself at last, and Christ's word did but anticipate and effect in a moment what the very course of nature must have effected in the end. Even the transmutation from water to wine, and the multiplication of the bread, are not without their analogies, however remoter; and thus, too, is it with most of the other miracles. But between being and the negation of being, the opposition is not relative, but absolute; between death and life a gulf lies, which nothing that nature lends helps us even in imagination to bridge over. These considerations sufficiently explain how it should come to pass that these raisings from the dead are signs more spoken against than any other among the mighty works which the Lord accomplished.

The present will be an apt moment for saying something concerning them, and the relations of difficulty in which they stand, if not to the other miracles, yet to one another. For they are not exactly the same miracles repeated three times over, but may be contemplated as in an ever ascending scale of difficulty, each a greater outcoming of the power of Christ than the preceding. For as the body of one freshly dead, from which life is but just departed, is very different from a mummy or a skeleton, so is it, though not in so great a degree, different from a corpse whence for some days the breath of life has fled.—There is, so to speak, a fresh-trodden way between the body, and the soul which has just forsaken it, and, according to that Jewish legend, which may rest on a very deep truth, lingers for a while and hovers near the tabernacle where it has dwelt so long, and to which it knows itself bound by links which even now have not been divided for ever. Even science itself has arrived at the conjecture that the last echoes of life ring in the body much longer than is commonly supposed; that for a while it is full of the reminiscences of life. Out of this we may explain how it so frequently comes to pass that all which marked the death-struggle passes presently away, and the true image of the departed, the image it may be of years long before, reappears in perfect calmness and in almost ideal beauty. Which things being so, we shall at once recognize in the quickening of him that had been four days dead,

yet mightier wonder than in the raising of the young man who was borne out to his burial; since that burial, according to Jewish custom, would have followed death by an interval, at most, of a single day; and again in that miracle a mightier outcoming of Christ's power than in the raising of Jairus's daughter, wherein life's flame, like a newly extinguished taper, was still more easily re-kindled again, being brought in contact with him in whom was the fountain-flame of all life. Mightier, also, than any of these wonders, will be the wonder of that hour, when all the dead of old, that have lain, some of them for so many thousand years, in the dust of death, shall be summoned from, and shall leave their graves at the same quickening voice.—[Trench on the Miracles.

A RISKY BUSINESS,

WITH SOME ILLUSTRATIONS OF IT.

I tell you, sir, it is a risky business to touch the brain. A minister of the Gospel told me of a member of his congregation, as noble a fellow as ever lived—generous—there was not a member of his church that gave as much as he, though only a member of the congregation, for the support of the Gospel; rich—sleeping partner in a firm in New York; with a wife and one child; living in good style. The only fault the minister had to find with him was, he would occasionally take a glass of wine, and would give it to the young men; and he said he had often talked with him about it. One day he saw him playing with his boy, and asked him—"Do you love your son?" "Love him! noble little fellow! I love him better than my own life." "You would not harm him?" "Harm him! hurt my boy! Never!" "Now you never thought that a glass of wine—" "Stop, you are a fanatic; I respect you as a minister, but not your fanaticism on this point. The idea of a glass of wine hurting this boy—that I am going to ruin my child! Let this be a tabooed question between us. I have no patience to hear you talk so foolishly about it." It was about six weeks after that one of the partners in the house came to see him on some business, and they rode to a manufacturing town about twelve miles distant. He was one of those men "mighty to drink wine, and a man of strength to mingle strong drink;" and there is no blessing pronounced on such men that we can find in the Bible. But he drank this man drunk for the first time in his life; and when they got to the hotel the city gentleman laughed at his

maudlin companion, and said, "I wonder what his wife will say to that." Returning, they drove up to the gate, and the child, with his mother, was on the marble steps, waiting for papa. In stepping from the carriage, the drunken man's foot caught in the reins, and he stumbled. If he had been sober he would have kept hold of the reins, and the accident could not have happened. But it made him angry, his self-control was disturbed, and he took the boy by the shoulder, twisted him around, and threw him down. As he was unable to walk, they carried him into the hall, and laid him on a settee; he fell off that on the floor, and went to sleep.

This clergyman told me—"They sent for me, and I never spent such a night in my life. There lay that child dead, the wife in convulsions, and the man asleep—asleep, with a dead child, whose yellow locks were dabbled in blood, lying in another room—asleep, with two physicians trying to save the life of his wife—asleep, under the damning influence of wine. When he awoke it was a fearful waking. Pushing back his hair—"What is the matter? Where am I? Where is my boy? Where is my child? I must see him." "You cannot." "I must, I will! Where is my boy?" "You cannot see him." "I must see him—I must see my boy!" They took him into the room, and turned down the sheet; and when he saw him he cried out, "Oh, my God!" and fell back senseless." That clergyman told me—and I have his name in my note-book—"One year from that day I buried his body, brought from a lunatic asylum, to lay side by side with his wife and child."

Young man, thank God for your safety, if you have ever dared to tamper with that which disturbs the action of the brain, and brings a man to a point where he knows not what he is about. It is risky business to touch the brain, and it is the business of alcohol to do it.—*J. B. Gough.*

Christ is a most precious commodity. He is better than rubies or the most costly pearls; and we must part with our gold, with our shining gold, our old sins, our most shining sins, or we must perish forever. Christ is to be sought and bought with any pains, at any price; we cannot buy this gold too dear. He is a jewel worth more than a thousand worlds, as all know who have Him. Get Him, and get all; miss Him and miss all.

THE WORLD'S OLDEST POEM.

BY THE REV. FREDERIC GREEVES.

Concluded.

But the Book of Job is to be regarded as a Poem, not only from its employment of sublime and beautiful imagery, but also because it *lays bare, with matchless power, the depths of strength and tenderness that lie hidden in the human heart.*

How wonderfully is this done in the character and history of Job! He is introduced to us at first with nothing remarkable about him—rich and prosperous—just to his neighbours, benevolent to the poor, loving to his children, faithful to his God. But in all this there is nothing remarkable: it was the case of hundreds in his day; it is the case of thousands in our own: and had all this continued, he would have gone down to a nameless grave, and a few generations after, his very memory would have been erased. Suddenly sorrow comes and touches him. In a moment he is transfigured. No new power is imparted to him, but those already in him are brought into activity. Immediately he rises into a hero: his grandeur becomes colossal; he projects the shadow of his trial, and the light of his triumph over forty centuries. He acquires a name that will endure as long as earth endures. And so true is all this to the most secret principles of our nature, that even now after a hundred generations have successively trodden on his dust, and laid down to sleep beside him, our own hearts, and the hearts of all who read the story, beat in perfect harmony with the stricken, but most human, heart of the Patriarch of Uz!

This man is a man: his heart beats, every pulse of it, in perfect unison with mine; and yet what a hero the man is!—Look at his tenderness! We see this more in his silence, than in all his speech. One of the tenderest and most touching things in all Literature is this most eloquent and pathetic silence of Job about his children. Ten of them are gone; and through the whole of his complaints, he never mentions them. "What!" you say, "do you call that tenderness; not to speak of his children? one would have expected him to name them first of all." Glad we are to

hear you say so, though it is a great mistake; because it shows this is a kind of sorrow you have never known. If your character can be perfected without it, God grant you never may! But let us tell you to help you to understand Job, that it is the shallow stream that murmurs; deep waters are silent: that when real sorrow comes, it falls upon the heart as heavy as an avalanche and as cold; no tears then, no complainings: the heart smitten and withered, like that of Job, is as the stricken deer, whose only remaining wish is to penetrate the depths of the tangled forest, hide the pang from every human eye, and die in peace. Lest you should accuse us of explaining the silence of Job unfairly, (as you very likely will if you measure his sorrow by any you have known,) we will quote the opinion of Tennyson, expressed in his poem "In Memoriam," one of the most beautiful poems that has appeared in our day.

"The lesser griefs that may be said,
That breathe a thousand tender vows
Are but as servants in a house
Where lies the master newly dead;
Who speak their feeling as it is,
And weep the fulness from their mind:
'It will be hard,' they say, 'to find
Another service such as this.'
My lighter moods are like to these,
Which out of words a comfort win;
But there are other griefs within,
And tears that at the fountain freeze;
For by the hearth the children sit
Cold in that atmosphere of death,
And scarce endure to draw their breath,
Or like to noiseless phantoms flit:
But open converse is there none,
So much the vital spirits sink
To see the vacant chair, and think
'How good! how kind! and he is gone!'"

Such is the Poet Laureate's beautiful appreciation of the silence of profound sorrow. And in this silence on the part of Job, no less than in all his utterances, we see the tenderness of the man's heart. And this tenderness is a part of heroism. A great heart is always a tender one. And such was the heart of Job!

And then look at the man's strength.—Two proofs suggest themselves of this: his determined opposition to his mistaken friends; his firm trust in his God. His friends try to shake him out of confidence

in his own integrity. Everything is on their side: the temptations of the devil; the suggestions of his own fears; his wish to be rid of their tormenting insinuations. Why does he not yield a little? Why not say, "It may be so! Perhaps you are right"? That would satisfy them: he might reckon at once on their sympathy and prayers. How many of us would have yielded all, rather than be troubled to argue with them. Not so; Job. No "reed shaken of the wind" is he; but a tree—a strong, grand tree—scathed by the lightnings, it is true, and quivering like the aspen, to the uttermost leaf of the furthest spray: but still as deeply rooted as ever, and as determined in his resistance to all spiritual attacks. He tells them openly that he recognizes in them the malice of Satan, by whom he is "wounded in the house of his friends;" that he knows his infernal adversary is let loose upon him, and that all they say is but further proof of it. And still, amidst the din of controversy—in which he contends,—alone, as he believes, against earth and hell—amid the onslaught of pain, doubt, and frenzy, fell enemies urged on by the Devil himself—under the canopy of a darkened heaven, and a sky that is as brass to his complainings—forsaken, confused, and wounded; still, he stands at bay—like the standard-bearer of a defeated host, beset alone by his enemies, mangled by their thrusts and blows,

"Sore toiled, his riven arms to havoc hewn,"—

but unable as ever to yield—and, amid the closing darkness, still upholding above the polluting breath of that hostile array, the white ensign of his innocence, upon which, dying he will fall,—that he may be buried still grasping it on the lonely field. And then, see his firm trust in God. Everything is against this. He has been stricken, terribly stricken, when he had no consciousness that he deserved it. And He who permitted this,—instead of appearing, to explain the mystery,—has hidden Himself from His servant. All around in the darkness does the Patriarch grope after Him, but it is in vain. "Behold, I go forward, but He is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive Him; on the left hand He doth work, but I cannot behold Him; on the right hand He hideth Himself, but I cannot

see Him: but"—and oh, how glorious, how heroic it is!—"but He knoweth the way I take: when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." He cries again and again to the heavens, but there is no voice, nor any (apparently) that regardeth. The clouds are black and thick above him. The lightnings play around his head. Already they have struck off his branches; already left him a scarred and blackened trunk, monumental of misfortune. The next blow may cleave him to the ground. But he fears it not. He sits upon a dunghill indeed; but, with him upon it, that dunghill is a throne. He looks calmly to the threatening cloud. His bald, bare head is ready. Let it come, It will make no difference in his confidence—"Though He *slay* me, yet will I trust in Him: but I will maintain mine own ways before Him." This is, in real life, just what the poet Campbell has put into the lips of an imaginary character, whom he calls "the last man." He supposes the one survivor of the human race, following the sun, in the hour of his last setting, with words like these:—

"Go, Sun, while mercy holds me up
On Nature's awful waste
To drink this last and bitter cup
Of wrath that man shall taste.
Go, tell the night that hides thy face
Thou heard'st the last of Adam's race
On earth's sepulchral clod
The darkening universe defy,
To quench his immortality,
Or shake his trust in God!"

Such a declaration, under such circumstances, would be heroic; but not one whit more so than the conduct of Job. For him the universe *was* darkened. Not a gleam of light remained. But his trust in God was as strong as ever. Was he not a hero? Did imagination ever picture a character so tender, yet so strong!

And yet this was no more than a man; a man of like passions with us; a man as weak and full of infirmity as we; a man who, before he was tried, had no more of the hero apparent about him than ourselves; who, when tried, had no other support than is promised to you, and promised to you in a higher degree than to him.—All the strength and tenderness that furnished the original character of Job are slumbering in the calm depths of your own

untroubled heart. All the divine helps that transformed Job into the hero he became, are freely offered you from above. Whether circumstances will ever occur, in this life, to call forth all the powers of your being, and to reveal you fully to yourself, only your Maker knows. But to prepare yourself for such circumstances, and to be in communication with the divine help you will then need,—this is your part.—Do not think you are prevented from being a hero by the *obscurity of your station*. The world's ideas of heroism are very false. To it Alexander is a hero, who never conquered himself, but died of debauchery in Babylon. To it Napoleon is a hero, who put away the wife of his youth—the wife of his love—from motives of miserable policy. From such heroism as theirs, *obscurity of station does hinder you*; but not from the heroism of Job, the having the heart within you tender, and strong, and true. Nor let any of us think that woman is prevented from this heroism by *the conditions of her sex*. Who is this that has made her dwelling amid the howlings of the storm?

The startled waves leap over it; the storm
Smites it with all the scourges of the rain;
And steadily against its solid form

Press the great shoulders of the hurricane.

See her as she issues from her safe shelter, to measure her woman's strength against all the power of the tempest, and snatch from the hungry billow its half-drowned prey! and write high among the list of real heroes, Grace Darling's name. Who, again, is this that has taken her place on the field where embattled host meets embattled host, where the real conqueror is death, gathering laurels alike from the vanquished and the victors, and wreathing them in triumph around his brow? See her as she walks through Scutari hospitals, seeming the very impersonation of calm strength,—and strong men stricken down in the very prime of their manhood, mutilated, and with glazed eyes, look up languidly from beds of suffering, and think "God hath sent his angel," surely! Let her name, too, be written high upon the scroll of Fame—Florence Nightingale! Heroism like theirs, all cannot emulate. But look at this Mother who has come to the Saviour. From the coasts of Tyre and Sidon she has come.—Her daughter is afflicted. See her, as, fr-

getting the timidity of her sex, she urges her way through the dense and crushing crowd. See her as she disregards the cold harsh words of the Master's very disciples. See her as she sets herself to argue the matter with the very Lord Himself!—Why, mothers have not been afraid of lions, when they have contended for their children: and shall she be afraid of Him! He calls her a dog! What then? A dog can love its offspring. A dog can catch a crumb. Is she not a heroine? Now, whether circumstances will ever occur to you that will exhibit these sublime qualities, we cannot tell. But heroism consists not in showing these qualities, but in having them: not in seeming great, but in being so. Act well your part. Do each day's duties well. Bear each day's trials patiently. Encounter each day's conflicts bravely. And, above all, live in prayer and faith, and love toward God; that will strengthen the weakest character, and give depth to the shallowest: and then, without ever rising above, or sinking beneath, your present station, you may be "a hero in life's strife." But changes may come.—Joy may pass away; for her hand is ever on her lips, bidding adieu! Friends may be taken; for God hath sold the forest unto death, and his axe even now is at the root of the trees. What is sweet may become bitter; what is bright may become dark; life may be a weariness, and, like Job, you may "long for death, and dig for it as for hid treasure." But, even then, trust in God, such as his, will support you. Remember the case of the noble and eloquent Robert Hall, who, amid sufferings sharper and more protracted than attend some forms of martyrdom, said to those around him, "I have not complained; have I?" "No, Mr. Hall." "Then, by God's grace, I hope I never may." With examples like these before you, even in the midst of life's bitterest adversities,

"Oh, fear not, in a world like this!
And thou shalt know, ere long,—
Know how sublime a thing it is
To suffer, and be strong!"

We now return to the point whence we started, and say, that the beautiful and profound revealings of the human heart which the Book of Job contains, constitute it a poem in the loftiest sense of the word, be-

cause there is no theme, either of nature or of imagination, which can vie in interest with that human heart, whose feelings are often stabler than mountains—fresher than flowers—deeper than seas—and in mysterious harmony, by turns, with all that is noble, and all that is ignoble, in the universe.

But once again—if the merits of a poem are at all to be measured by the *design it is intended to serve*, the lessons it is given to teach, what poem, in this respect, can surpass the Book of Job? Divine poetry is almost necessarily the sublimest. Schiller, in one of his exquisite German lyrics, has beautifully alluded to this. He describes Jupiter as wearied with the perpetual complaints made by men of their hard lot, and resolving that the earth should be divided afresh, and that each should choose the portion he most desired. It was done; and when all else had seized their shares, at last, from afar off came the poet. Finding that all was gone, he bewailed his fate in strains so sweet that they reached the monarch on his throne, and brought this answer: "How is it that thou appealest to me? Where wast thou when they were dividing the world?" "I was," replied the poet, "with Thee. Mine eyes were gazing upon thy beauties: mine ears were captivated with the harmonies of thy heaven. Pardon a soul so absorbed in the contemplation of thine unutterable glory, that it neglected to secure its earthly heritage." And Jove did pardon that loving spirit, and assigned to it a portion far surpassing the good things of this world.

"What can be done?" said Jove. "The earth is given;

The field, the chase, the mart are gone from me;
Since 't is thy joy to dwell with me in heaven,
Come when thou wilt, for thee the path is free."

Thus, in truthful fable, Schiller has represented the poet's sphere and privilege, and taught that no theme is so majestic as one that leads the mind "from nature up to nature's God."

There is, however, a peculiar interest attaching to the Book of Job, even among divine poems, because it alone, of all the books of the Bible, grapples with those mysteries of God's providential government which have more or less perplexed every intelligent inhabitant of the universe.

It gives the answer to life's great enigma. It teaches that life is not, as most young people seem to regard it, a fete or carnival; much less, as some old people seem to think it, a temporary lodging in the dungeon of the castle of Giant Despair—that it is something between the two—a struggle, a strife, a mortal conflict between good and evil; that it is not, therefore, to be entered upon with unthinking levity, much less with unhoping gloom—but bravely, strongly, manfully, expecting with calmness the inevitable shocks of the combat, and looking up hopefully, and always, to Him in whose strength already we are more than conquerors. The object of the book is precisely that which Milton announced in the "Paradise Lost:"

"That to the height of this great argument
I may assert eternal providence,
And justify the ways of God to men."

But we do not hesitate to say that the Book of Job has done it better than the work of Milton. It has traced the course of the conflict more closely, and shown its end more clearly, and brought God Himself into more vital union with it. And this lesson my friends and fellow-soldiers in this battle, I earnestly hope you will all learn. If there is any one lesson more than all the rest which is important for your happiness and welfare, it is, that you cannot afford to allow your characters to be frivolous and unthinking, much less to be gloomy and unhoping; even for this life you cannot afford it—all success and happiness depend on being thoroughly earnest in life's great battle. Neither will earnestness avail you, unless to dependence on yourselves you join dependence on your God—that God who is so beautifully revealed throughout this Poem, watching from His highest heaven the conflict waged by each, controlling the assault, supporting the assaulted, Himself giving us the victory, and then uttering from His own lips the conqueror's praises, and wreathing, with His own Divine hand, the garland round his brow.

One word on the great mystery of this matchless Poem. I borrow the thought, with limitations, variations, and additions, from a powerful and popular writer, when I say:—

"It is sometimes true, the saying that

sunshine comes after storm. Sometimes true, or who could live? but not always, not even often. Equally true it is, that misfortunes never come single; that in most human lives there are periods of trouble, blow following blow—wave following wave, from opposite and unexpected quarters, with no natural or logical sequence, till all God's billows have gone over the soul. Such a period was this in the life of Job.

"How paltry, at such dark times, are all theories that hang on self! Easy enough does it seem for us to live without God while all around is smooth and common place.—But what, if some thing, or some person—or many things, or many persons, one after another—took a man up and dashed him down, again and again, and again, till he was ready to cry out, with Hezekiah, 'I reckoned till morning, that like a lion he would break all my bones—from morning to evening he will make an end of me'? What, if he thus found himself hurled, perforce, on the real universal experience of humanity, and made free, in spite of himself, by doubt and fear, and horror of darkness, of the brotherhood of woe, common alike to the simplest peasant, and to every great soul that has left his impress and sign-manual on the hearts of after-generations? What, if he had thus gone down into the depths of despair, and there, out of the utter darkness, asked the question of all questions—which might well occur in the crisis of his history to Job—'Is there a God? and if so, what is He doing with me?'

"Now, what relief would such a one have in self-confidence?—To wrap himself sternly in himself, and say: 'I will endure, though all the universe be against me'—how fine it sounds! But *who has done it?* No: there is but one chink through which we may see light—one rock on which our feet may find standing-place even in the abyss; and that is the belief, intuitive and inspired, that the billows are God's billows; and that, though we go down to hell, He is there also; that we are not educating ourselves, but that he is educating us; that these seemingly incoherent troubles—storm following earthquake, and earthquake fire—have all unity and purpose in His mind, though we see it not; that sorrows do not come singly only because He is making

short work with our spirits; and because the more effect He sees produced by one blow, the more swiftly He follows it up by another, till, in one great and varied crisis, seemingly long to us, but short, indeed, compared with immortality, our spirit may be

"Heated hot with burning fears,
And bathed in baths of hissing tears,
And battered with the strokes of doom,
To shape and use."

Who, after reading the book of Job, will venture to doubt that wonderful lessons are taught in the school of affliction? Harsh school-mistress she undoubtedly is, and stern and severe to look upon; but her lessons are thoroughly taught, and, once learned, they are gain to us for ever. It was so with Job! He had a lesson to learn among the ashes, that he could not learn among the quiring seraphim; the one thing which earth can teach, and heaven cannot! Do you ask what it is? It is—amid darkness, and sorrow, and strife, amid the opposition of foes, and the hidings of his Father's face—to be submissive, patient, trustful. And many besides him have learned wonderful lessons from affliction—

"There is no God; the foolish saith,
But none 'there is no sorrow;
And Nature oft the cry of faith
In bitter need doth borrow:
Eyes that the preacher could not school
By wayside graves, are raised;
And lips cry 'God be pitiful!
That ne'er said 'God be praised!'"

Oh, there is endless mercy in affliction, though we cannot see it now! A day is coming when those veiled visitors who have sometimes taken up their abode with us, and whose stay has seemed all too long, shall slip off their dark disguises, and show their smiling loving face; and we shall see that, in giving lodging to afflictions, we were "entertaining angels unawares."

And now, we have finished with the beautiful Book before us. I hope that you will read it more, and love it more, and profit more by its sublime and heart-searching teachings for the time we have spent upon it. We cannot dilate further on its manifold lessons; its exposition of Providence, and its history of a suffering saint; its doctrine of the invisible enemy and of the sequel of his false accusations;

its lessons to the afflicted, to the wicked, and to the bystander; its banquet for the poet and the divine; the charm of its antiquity, and the ever-new freshness of its teachings. We compare it, for its numerous helps, defences, and weapons, to an armoury of heaven; or for its treasures of poetry and theology to the mysterious Tree of Life, on which were twelve manner of fruits, and whose very leaves were for the healing of the nations. But this Book—the oldest in the Bible—stands not alone in its beauty and beneficence, as once it stood. Like the parent trunk of the Indian forest tree, it has become surrounded by many another kindred stem, distinctly rooted but united in essence: another, yet the same. Posterity has sung and rested beneath its foliage, and fed upon its fruit; and, as succeeding generations became more numerous, it spread forth its great branches to give them shade and shelter until its growth was complete, and its comprehensive embrace is sufficient to protect a world. Curious men have thought that they discovered gnarled knots on the stately stem of our English Bible, and gladly would they apply to it the axe of their clumsy criticism; but may we not bid them in your name to “Spare the tree—touch not a single bough”? The light the Book affords is only dim, but it is just such as is suited to our feeble vision; and, though we cannot yet gaze full upon the Glorious Sun walking in His dazzling brightness, yet with the darkest shadows of time is mingled the light of the coming day—of that day, for which, if faithful, we are preparing—and to which, whether faithful or not, we are hastening. For “the night is far spent.” Already the

“Dawn of another life breaks over our earthly horizon,

As o’er the Eastern sky the first grey streaks of the morning.”

“Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face.” As we gaze upon the starry night, we view the brilliancy of the lamps of heaven, but their courses are to us incomprehensible: we know not why here they are thickly sown, and there thinly scattered, or why one star differeth from another star in glory; but, could we climb the hills of heaven, we might, from that centre point of the universe, behold the

map of creation in beauteous order, and complete regularity, spread around the throne of the Eternal:—so, we trust, that one day will give us an insight into the dealings of God’s providence; and all that, in time, is broken, disjointed, and harsh to the eye of the scorner, and to the wisest and best is deeply mysteriouse—will then appear to our glorified vision clear, harmonious and simple, in the golden sunlight of eternity. We look upon that wondrous clustering of stars that forms the milky way; and, as we regard each star as the centre of a system, we are overwhelmed with the conception of so many orbs, all moving agreeably to law, and circling their respective courses for ages without confusion; but still more astonishing, and still more glorious, will it be, when at the last it shall appear, that of the millions of the human race, each has been the free originator of thoughts, volitions, and deeds; that these have flowed from each in a perpetual stream; that they have conflicted with one another, and conflicted with the revealed will of God; that, nevertheless, all have been woven together in the beautiful tissues of the providential government of the Almighty, and, “all things have worked together for good to them that love God.”

Then shall they sing in heaven the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb: “Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, thou King of Saints.”

IN CHRIST JESUS.

“But now in Christ Jesus, ye who were sometimes afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ.”—Eph. ii. 13.

If one were asked, Do you live near the court? have you free access of his majesty? did you ever kiss the king’s hand? who would hesitate one moment for an answer? Consciousness would instantly dictate one. Pray, is Christian experience so dark and doubtful a matter, that if asked, Are you brought nigh to God? do you live near to God? have you free access to God? that we cannot answer with some degree of knowledge and certainty? Oh, my dear fellow-Christians, though we are brought nigh to God, yet we do not live near Him. Hence

our doubt and uncertainty. Our hearts and affections get roving in the high roads of earthly honour riches or pleasures.—Hence clouds of dust arise; they so dim our sight, and cloud our views, that we can hardly see our way or tell where we are.

Here we are reminded, 1st, that we “were sometimes afar off.” Awful distance. As far as possible from God, because so far from original righteousness. As far off from God as a devil—naturally no more desire to draw nigh to him. Nay, Satan had possession of us, ruled in and over us. We loved our master, hated our God, and delighted at our distance from Him. O be covered with shame, be clothed with humility, yet lift up your head with joy.—For, 2nd, we are brought nigh to God.—O, says one, I wish I was sure of this. It is true in the Word, that sinners are brought nigh to God. You can only know this for yourself by experience. Therefore consider, 3rd, how we are brought nigh “in Christ Jesus.” By the blood of Christ, by the faith of Christ, we are reconciled to God. By the blood of Christ we are justified before God, and are at peace with God. If you are brought nigh to God, 1st, Christ is precious to you. Your heart is towards Him, your hope is fixed upon Him. 2nd. This blood is highly praised by you. You look to His atonement for the pardon of sins, to cleanse your conscience from guilt, and bring peace to your soul. 3rd. By Him you delight to draw nigh to God, making His blood and righteousness your only plea for salvation; and, 4th, you will live near to God in love, and walk before Him in holiness. You will hate the things you once loved, and love the things you once hated. In this way only you can enjoy fellowship and peace with God, comfort from God, and assurance that you are a child of God. Says Christ, “If ye love me, keep my commandments, and the Comforter shall abide with you for ever.” (John xiv. 15.) W. M. 1773.

THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL.

The Gospel is good news about the “abundant mercy” of that God against whom we have all sinned. It is glad tidings concerning Him, who came into the world to save sinners. It is the proclamation of free pardon to the most guilty. It

is the offer of complete absolution to all without money and without price. “Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters!”

It is the Father’s welcome to the returning prodigal, when he is yet a great way off,—however far he may have wandered, and however much he may have sinned.—There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.—“Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon,”

It is the royal invitation of One whose gifts are the gifts of a King. “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.—For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.” “I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.” He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. . . . As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us.” “Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift.”

The Gospel is the “Word of Reconciliation.” For “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.” It is His message of peace, assuring us that Jesus is the propitiation for our sins—“having made peace through the blood of His cross.”

It is the “Story of Grace.” “Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich.” It is the history of a love that was “strong as death;” a love that many waters cannot quench, “neither can the floods drown it.” “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. But God commendeth His love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners,—“when we were enemies,”—“Christ died for us.”

The Gospel is, in a word, the salvation of “grace, mercy, and peace,” from the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, the Triune Jehovah, in whose name we were baptized, and whose benediction is upon all who worship Him in spirit and in truth.

WINGS, AND THE WAY TO USE THEM.

BY GEORGE B. CHEEVER, D.D.

In all divine things, speculation is more familiar to us than practice; we often begin at the top to fall to the bottom, to work our way by God's grace, slowly but surely, to the top. Every step of the way, if we would be sure, must be by experience; wings, and a sudden flight will not do. There must be a patient waiting on the Lord, before the wings can be used: and the wings must grow out of our own souls by practical divine grace working first within; for God does not fasten the wings to our shoulders to give us the luxury of flying, but while we are waiting on God, the wings are growing, and become strong.—Every thing lasting is a labour, a work; and thus it becomes a habit, permanent and powerful. Our heavenly *habits* are wings; when they are well set, and thoroughly formed, then they bear us upwards; until that be the case, we have to bear *them*, and it may be hard work, as the formation of all good habits is at first in fallen natures. But it is an unspeakable blessedness in this law of habit, working heavenwards, that what at first was labour becomes infinite delight. The nearer we are borne towards heaven, the more elastic and spontaneous becomes the motion of our wings, till it is almost involuntary—just like the play of the lungs in a clear June atmosphere. An albatross, rising from the sea, has to run upon the waves at first, but once risen and soaring, there is hardly a perceptible motion in the broad, white pinions of the majestic bird. Such are the wings of habit, wrought out by divine grace, and winging the regenerated nature to the throne of God. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint."

Now, it is a sad mistake for men to have wings and not use them, not fly with them.—Why, if we have wings, are we not all soaring? The Christian life, in too many cases, is like a sea of agitated waves, along the surface of which the albatrosses are half-running, half flying, but never rising into the bright clear air. The pursuit of game keeps them on the surface. So the wings of too many Christians are only spread to keep them from drowning while pursuing the thing of earth, not to raise them towards heaven. Too many persons seem to use their religion as a diver does his bell, to venture down into the deep of worldliness with safety, and there grope for pearls, with just as much of heaven's air as to keep them from suffocating. Now, our air was

given us not for the purpose of diving for pearls, but for breathing freely, rising from the world, and soaring towards God and glory.—And wings are given us not for the purpose of enabling us to stay, fluttering on the surface of the water, till we have caught our prize, but to bear us upward—upward to the throne of God.

"Oh that I had wings like a dove! then would I fly away, and be at rest!" "But, my dear friend," says the faithful prophet beside the Psalmist, and the gentle monitor within, "you have wings, and what you want is to use them freely, confidently, trusting in the Lord." "Oh that I knew how to break forth from my prison," says the Christian in Giant Despair's castle. "But, thou despairing soul," says the same voice of faith and duty, "thou hast a joy of promise in thy bosom that will open every lock in Doubting Castle, kept by Giant Despair. Pluck it out and try!"

Certainly, it is not so much wings that we need, as the heart to use them aright, the willingness to bid adieu to earth, and fly away from earth with them. A dove could not fly if we tied her with a weight to her dove-cot. A lark could not soar if her feet were confined in the net of the fowler. But surely in vain is the snare laid in the sight of any bird. The very instinct of the little creature will not let it seek even its food where the net has been plainly laid over it. But the enemy of our souls may lay his snares right in our view, and yet we sometimes make directly at them, for the sake of the glittering prizes that seem to lie beneath them, and which we think we shall have skill enough, by the help of our wings and great watchfulness, to snatch away without getting entangled. But it is perilous work flying at snares; it is much safer, wiser, and better, to keep clear of them. And our wings were given us for this very purpose, and to bear us up to heaven.

"But we cannot always be soaring and swinging. Even the Psalmist has to confess this, when he says, *My soul cleaveth unto the dust; and, My soul melteth for heaviness.*" No! but you can always keep above the world by God's help, by watching unto prayer; just as the moment the Psalmist finds the glue upon his wings, and has to complain of dust and heaviness, he cries out on the instant, *Quicken thou me according to thy Word!*—And when he has done this a little while, then again the wings get free, and he is able to say, *As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God!*—And when he can say, *My soul followeth hard after Thee*, then he is able to say, *Thy right hand upholdeth me!*

So it is that fervent praying is itself soaring. The soul may seem, in the sad experi-

ence of its own heaviness, to be in the dungeon, but God sees that while bemoaning its own earthliness, and crying out imploringly for deliverance, it is in reality winging its way towards heaven. And soon it will see and feel the light upon its own wings. But if it fly in the darkness, it is not less flying. Our prayers are really and truly the wings of our souls. Sometimes it is possible that the enjoyment of light and sunshine itself may make us indolent in the use of them, and then a dungeon experience is necessary to set us at work. God can at any time take the wings from the soul, and let it drop, and then again it has to cry out, *Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name!* There is this prison-experience, as a child is sometimes shut up in a dark room for punishment. But it is not God's fault, but ours; for God would much rather we would live habitually in the light of His countenance, and be ever free upon the wing singing and soaring.

The joy of the Lord is our strength, and among the first most precious fruits of the Spirit are, Love, Joy, Peace. But then follows *Long-suffering*. Now this long-suffering may itself be of such a nature, for a season, as to restrain a Christian's joy, and possibly becloud his mind as to visible peace and comfort. Even the very conflict that is sometimes necessary to maintain long-suffering and patience, may prevent joy, even while it is preparing the way for more permanent and unchangeable joy. The fruits of the Spirit, the elements of grace itself, in a partially sanctified nature, in conflict with our corruption, sometimes *work* almost like a fermentation or strife, while coming to an adjustment and harmony. A calm, serene, heavenly-minded soul, where Love is the regent of all the graces, seems just on the verge of heaven. But much discipline, it is likely, will have to be passed through, and many states and trials of mind very different from joy, and many activities of the soul very different from flying, before that heavenly triumph is attained. And therefore, though joy is a very precious thing, yet the want of it, if other graces are active, is no proof against a Christian's piety.

RULE THYSELF.

Hassan Ben Omar threw himself prostrate upon the ground, outside of the walls of Bassora, and tore his hair with rage. In three years of riot and luxury he had dissipated the wealth which he had inherited from Good Omar, his father. His house, his vineyards, his olive-yards, were all gone; and now he would be compelled to seek employment as a camel-driver, or beg of those who had feasted sumptuously on his extravagance. He cursed his unhappy fate, reproached Allah, blas-

phemed the Prophet, charged his friends with ingratitude, and called loudly upon death to release him from his misery. His old servants approached and tried to comfort him; but he drove them away with abuse and blows, and dashed himself again upon the earth. For a long time he lay moaning and weeping; at length a voice sounded in his ears: "Listen, Hassan Ben Omar! Allah intends thee good."

Hassan raised his head, and his eyes rested upon a venerable dervish, who was calmly contemplating his grief.

"Begone, old man!" he cried, "if thou canst not work a miracle for my relief."

"Listen," replied the dervish; "the Prophet has sent me to serve thee. What wouldst thou have?"

"Give me my possessions again—my vineyards, my fields, and my gold."

"And what would it avail thee," said the old man, "if I were to do this? When they were thine; thou hadst not the wisdom to keep them; in three years thou wouldst be as wretched as now. But attend, Hassan Ben Omar! Reform thy life, govern thy passions, moderate thy desires, hate thy wine-cup, labor for thy bread, eat only when thou art hungry, and sleep when thou art weary. Do these things for one year, and thou shalt be monarch of a mighty kingdom."

A mist darkened the eyes of Hassan. When it was gone, behold, the dervish was nowhere to be seen. Hassan invoked the aid of Allah, and rose from the ground with a light heart. He joined a caravan, which set forth for the desert the next day. He began to rise early, and to labor with diligence. A cup of water and a few dates formed his simple meal; and at night he lay down by the side of his camels and enjoyed sweeter repose than he had ever known before. If his anger was excited, or if he was tempted to give the rein to any passion, the form of the dervish seemed to rise before him, with a mild rebuke upon his lips, and his heart was calmed. Thus for a year he lived a frugal and patient life—following to the letter the exhortations of the dervish. At the end of the time he was again at the same place, before the walls of Bassora. He prostrated himself upon the earth, and cried:

"Now, Allah, fulfill the promise!"

Suddenly he heard the same voice as before: "Hassan Ben Omar, thou hast done well, and thy reward is with thee. Behold, thy kingdom is *thyself!* I have taught thee to rule it. Be wise and happy."

Hassan looked in vain for the speaker—no one was near. He pondered deeply upon these things, and finally resolved to continue as he had begun.

Thus he lived many years, gradually becoming more prosperous, but firmly retaining his frugal and industrious habits, until he became richer than the Good Omar, his father, and all men called him Hassan the Wise.

THAT ONE WORD.

'I never can forget *that word* which was once whispered to me in an inquiry-meeting," said a pious man once to a friend. "What word was it?" "It was the word ETERNITY. A young Christian friend, who was yearning for my salvation, came up to me as I sat in my pew, and simply whispered 'Eternity' in my ear, with great solemnity and tenderness, and then left me. That word made me think, and I found no peace till I came to the cross."

The sainted M'Cheyne was once riding by a quarry, and stopped to look in at the engine-house. The fireman had just opened the door to feed the furnace with fresh fuel; when M'Cheyne, pointing in to the bright hot flame, said mildly to the man, "Does that fire remind you of anything?" The man could not get rid of the solemn question. To him it was an effectual arrow of conviction. It led him to the house of God, and will lead him, we trust, to heaven.

A single remark of the Rev. Charles Simeon, on the blessing which had resulted from the labours of Dr. Carey in India, first arrested the attention of Henry Martyn to the cause of missions. His mind began to stir under the new thought, and a perusal of the Life of Brainerd fixed him in his resolution to give himself to the dying heathen.

It is said that Harlan Page once went through his Sabbath school to get the spiritual census of the school. Coming to one of the teachers, he said, "Shall I put you down as having a hope in Christ?" The teacher replied, "No." "Then," said Mr. Page very tenderly, "I will put you down as having no hope." He closed his little book and left him. That was enough. God gave that young man's soul no rest till he found a hope beneath the cross.

A member of my church, on one occasion, overtook a young lady on her way to the prayer-meeting. She asked the young woman if she ever thought of her own salvation. The lady thus addressed replied, that during all her life she had never had one word spoken to her about the salvation of her soul! Within a month from that time, she became a devoted member of the flock of Christ.

Fellow-disciple! have you never yet spoken *one word* to an impenitent friend about the most momentous of all questions? Then I fear that you will find no one in heaven that you were the means, under God, of sending there. Though you may reach the "many mansions" yourself, I fear that your crown will glitter with no splendours. It will be a *starless crown*.—Cuyler's *Stray Arrows*.

HOME FEELINGS.

Cherish home-like feelings towards the Father's house. Like an ocean pilgrim who espies a speck of dimness, a wedge of vapour, rising from the deep, and in the cold evening he scarcely cares to be told that it is land, chill and sleepy, he sees no comfort for him in a little heap of distant haze, but, after a night's sound slumber, springing to the deck, the hazy hammock has spread out into a green and glittering shore, with the stir and floating streamers of a holiday in its villages, and with early summer in the gale which morning fetches from off its meadow flowers. So many a believer even has far-off and frosty sensations towards the Better Land; and it is not till refreshed from time's tumult—till waking up in some happy Sabbath's spiritual-mindedness, or skirting the celestial coast in the proximity of sickness and decline—that the dim speck projects into a solid shore, bright with blessed life and fragrant with empyreal air.

"Thou city of my God,
Home of my heart, how near.
At times, to faith's foreseeing eye,
Thy pearly gates appear!"

"O, then my spirit pants
To reach the land I love,
The fair inheritance of saints,
Jerusalem above."

And as with its remoteness, so with its attractions. You might imagine a man who had come far across the seas to visit a father whom he had not seen for many years, and in a house which he had never seen at all. And, coming to that part of the country, he espies a mansion with which he is nowise prepossessed, so huge and heavy does it look; but he is told that this is the dwelling, and a gruff ungainly porter opens for him the grand avenue gate; and no sooner does he find himself in the vestibule than a home-glow tells him he is right, and his elder brother hastens out to meet him, and conducts him to his chamber, and soon ushers him into the presence of friends whom he is amazed and overjoyed to meet. So, in the thought that we must put off these tabernacles and pass away we know not whither, there is something from which nature secretly recoils, and which gives to the earthward side of the Father's house a blank and heavy look; and at the avenue gate Death, the grim porter, none of us can like. But still it is the Father's house; and by preparing an apartment for us, and decorating it with his own hands, and by introducing us to dear kindred already there, our Elder Brother will do all he can to make it home.—Lessons from the Great Biography, by Dr. Hamilton.

THE GOOD NEWS.

November 15th, 1861.

THE FRENCH CANADIAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

BY REV. R. WALLACE, INGERSOLL.

This Society was formed at Montreal in 1839, upon a catholic united evangelical basis, and is under the direction of a Committee composed of ministers and members of various denominations.

The object is the evangelization of the French Canadians, numbering nearly a million of persons, who have long been kept in a state of great ignorance and poverty. The first missionaries were obtained in France or Switzerland, but now about three-fourths of the missionaries are French Canadians, who have been trained at our missionary schools.

The missionaries are described by the Committee as well adapted for their several spheres—as men of great patience and meekness, of strong faith and ardent zeal, able to answer wisely and readily the cavils of opponents without rendering railing for railing. They manifest a devoted attachment to the Word of God, and an earnest desire for the conversion of those among whom they labour, and wherever they are heard they make a favourable impression. The means employed by the Society are—1st. Circulation of the Scriptures and Religious tracts by colporteurs, and the systematic visitation of the people by Scripture readers and catechists. 2nd. Preaching of the Gospel by ministers and evangelists. 3rd. Education of the young of both sexes at missionary institutes. There are some 30 missionaries of these different classes labouring between Ottawa and Quebec.

Many thousand copies of the Scriptures in French have been circulated throughout the country, and thousands of the people are being gradually leavened by the Gospel of Christ. There are over 1200 actual converts. Over 900 young persons have received a good secular and religious education, most of whom are diffusing an evangelical influence among their countrymen, and are often instrumental in the conversion of relatives and others.

The operations of the Society might be greatly extended if they had more means at their disposal. Although managed with the greatest economy, the poor missionaries have often to suffer from unavoidable delays in the payment of their small salaries. Last year hundreds of children wishing to attend our missionary schools could not be received for want of funds. When God is increasing the success of the mission, why should pecuniary support diminish? Canada is a vast country, with noble rivers and broad lakes,—a fertile soil, valuable mines and forests—insuring a largely increasing commerce and population, and a GLORIOUS FUTURE, if its rising generation are only imbued with the principles of eternal truth, which alone can ensure the prosperity and happiness of a nation.

Owing to the access which we now have to the people, there is probably no country which will more abundantly repay money and labour spent in the work of evangelization than French Canada at the present time. Canada was doubtless transferred from France to Britain that it might be brought under the Gospel of Christ. The field is white to the harvest; prejudices have been extensively removed; the people are anxious for the education of their children and for the possession of the Word of God; the missionaries are well received. A remarkable awakening has commenced among the French Canadians, and we have reason to expect that the next ten years will exhibit far greater results than the last twenty years have produced. It is believed by many that this is the most important general mission in Canada, as its anniversary meeting draws the largest Protestant audience in the British Provinces. There was about 3,500 at last anniversary.

The future welfare of Canada, social, intellectual and spiritual, is closely bound up with the evangelization of the French Canadians. It would be as life from the dead to them as a people, and would also renew and invigorate the social system in Canada, and confer vast blessings on generations yet unborn.

The French Canadian is naturally a man of peace, of an easy and mild temper, and lacking the combativeness of the Anglo-Saxon. He often reads the Bible in secret, but shrinks from open resistance to authority. Yet when once led to embrace the

truth and to rest upon Christ Jesus for salvation, he maintains his profession with firmness and decision.

As illustrative of the work carried on, we give some examples:—

One of the converts of the Mission, a youth of 16, died in 1859. His grandmother urged him to send for the priest, to confess him. He said Jesus Christ was the sole priest he needed; the only one in whom he could trust, and who alone had power to forgive his sins. When charged with presumption for his views, he replied, "Yes! Jesus Christ is both *able* and *willing* to forgive me, and I trust in Him because I have his own word as a pledge. He has said that 'whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life;' and as He is the Son of God as well as the Son of Man, He cannot break His word; I shall not be deceived in trusting my salvation to Him alone, and refusing all other mediators."

Madame Doudiet, the wife of the ordained Missionary at Belle Riviere, heard that a French Canadian Romanist woman was dying, and that she had lost faith in her own religion. Madame D. visited her, and asked her, "My dear friend, are you prepared to meet God?" "Meet God? No! I am not ready, and this torments me more than all my disease." She further stated that she feared it was too late to do anything to obtain salvation. Madame D. showed her from the Scriptures that it was not too late—that simply through faith in the merits of Jesus the crucified, her salvation would be secured. At length she saw the way of life, and exclaimed, "Yes! I will trust in Jesus alone—Jesus who has come to save sinners such as I am. Oh, now I feel happy! It seems to me as if a mountain, whose weight was crushing me, had just been removed, and that—" While thus expressing her new-born joy at having found the precious Saviour, her husband pushed forward and compelled Madame D. to leave the house, in spite of the remonstrances of his wife, who called to him, "What has the lady done? She has only spoken to me of the love of Jesus."

A young friar left the school of the Christian Brothers, and came to our Missionary Institute at Pointe aux Trembles in June, 1860. Another converted friar is now a colporteur. The pupils at Pointe

aux Trembles hold a boys' prayer-meeting, at which they pray most fervently for their own conversion, and for the conversion of their countrymen. Several young men are studying for the ministry, so that we hope soon to have the whole work of evangelization carried on by a native agency, who have readier access to the people than Missionaries from Europe.

The evident superiority of the youths trained at our school to those taught at the priests' school—the kind, thoughtful, and loving spirit of the Missionaries in all their intercourse with the people, *attracts the hearts of the people*, even as the sun attracts towards itself the Great Victoria Bridge, the gradual leavening influence of the Scriptures circulated throughout the country—and, finally, the conversion of M. Chiniquy—has made a great impression on the people.

Mr. Cornu writes:—"Towards evening I met a man whom I persuaded to purchase a New Testament. The next day as I was about starting, the man returned very angry, asking back his money, and saying that he had shown the book to the priest, who had declared it a very bad one. I returned it, but showed him and others present, under what a degrading yoke they placed themselves. It was all in vain; the priest had so roused the man's bigotry, that he even endeavoured by threats to prevent me from colporting. I told him the law protected me, but he stated that he would cause the Captain of Militia to arrest me. Indeed, I had not proceeded far offering my books when I was arrested by this officer. I asked him by what authority he arrested me. He replied, "Because you have no right to sell bad books, in this parish." But the trade is free." "Yes, but not cheating, by selling bad goods." "My wares are not bad, nor sold under false pretences; here is the Gospel of Jesus Christ, is that a bad book? look at it and examine it carefully before you decide." "I do not want to look at it; the priest has declared that your books are bad, and that is enough, you shall not sell them here." "Has the priest really said so?" "Yes." "You have heard him?" "Yes." "Very well I have then a legal recourse against the priest for interfering with my lawful trade, and decrying what I sell, and gentlemen you will serve me as

witnesses against the priest, so please to give me your names." This completely altered the case. They were extremely afraid I should get their names, and promised not to interfere with me. The Captain was finally persuaded to take a New Testament, and I requested him to read it carefully, until I called again, when he should point out to me what he had found bad in the book.

THE AWAKENING OF CONSCIENCE.—The Word of God cannot be listened to long with attention, and in a spirit of prayer, without bearing fruits. Once, after the evening meeting, one of our pupils came to me truly alarmed about himself, and told me with tears in his eyes, "I feel very unhappy; I once thought myself a Christian, and now I see that I was not converted, and that I am a very great sinner. Oh! I entreat you, pray God for me, ask him that he should forgive all my sins and give me a new heart." Another day, when the teachers were met together, we were interrupted by a boy who urged some of us to go without delay to one of his school-fellows, who, he said, needed comfort, as he was overcome by the fear of God's impending judgment. One of us went and found the boy with several pupils, praying together. He prayed and spoke with them of the Lord's mercy and promises in His Word to penitent sinners.

MEETING AGAIN UNDER TOUCHING CIRCUMSTANCES.—I was witness a few days ago of a very interesting occurrence. A young Canadian, who four years ago spent a winter with us, and finding his relatives set against him, emigrated to the United States, has just returned, and on his way home came first to visit the Institute. After shaking hands with the teacher, he looked towards the assembled pupils and his eye became riveted on one of them, until he exclaimed, "This must be my uncle!" and rushing to him and seizing his hand he said, "How do you happen to be here, you?" "I have come here to be taught what I should do in order to be saved." "Is it possible, you here and a pupil! This both astounds and rejoices me." "But how did you come to take such a step?" "Do you remember that three years ago you made me a visit after returning from Pointe aux Trembles. You read to me several portions of your gospel,

and I could not bear them without shedding tears, and we sat up together until four o'clock in the morning discussing religious matters. You went away, but I thought constantly upon what you had said, until at last I also embraced the Gospel. I have come here to learn to read, and in order to know the truth; hoping that this will prove as good for me as it has for you." These two former Romanists appeared full of joy and gratitude to meet again, and to find that they both had been brought to the precious knowledge of the Gospel, one of them through the instrumentality of the other. This occurrence has been to us a great encouragement to toil on in our work, at times so difficult.

TWO PUPILS AS SAILORS.—Another fact will show how our pupils labour to evangelize the country. In the spring, several pupils having completed the time allowed to them, were in search of some occupation by which to gain a livelihood. Two of them, unable to find more suitable work, engaged on board a French Canadian vessel, trading between Quebec and Ottawa City. They found themselves placed in the midst of a rough set, but they did not, however, disguise their faith. They thus soon incurred the contempt and ill-will of the captain and their fellow-sailors, but they were not discouraged, but comforted each other. They were nicknamed "Swiss" and "Methodist," but submitted, and accepted these names as if they had no other. Their patience, and good behaviour, soon produced a reaction in their favour, and the captain finding our two pupils the best educated men on board, was glad to trust to them his accounts and correspondence. Finally, both the captain and crew took a liking to them and granted them the fullest confidence. They were frequently seen reading silently on deck their New Testament, until a voice suggested they might as well read aloud for the benefit of all. The captain became gradually so attached to this reading of the Scriptures, that he took advantage of every moment of leisure to call upon one of our pupils to read. He ultimately bought a New Testament for the use of his children, and declared that for himself he had done with the priests. We may rest assured that the Word of God will not return to Him void.

THE DUTY OF THE PRESENT.

The past, present, and future, constitute our whole existence. The past was written down in our own memory, and in the Book of God's remembrance; we could not alter it, however desirous of so doing. It was irrevocable; and however much shame and confusion it might cause, there was no getting away from it. By the law of England, every criminal must be furnished—before trial—with a bill of indictment, showing all that was laid to his charge. We carried our bill of indictment within us: and, he believed the memory of the wicked to be "the worm that never dies." Geologists tell us, that the history of the earth is written within it; and naturalists say, the age and history of a tree can be read by sawing it across and counting its concentric rings of wood. There was said to be one of these for each year, and in a good year the layer was thick, whilst in a bad year it was thin. In like manner, the history of each of us was written within us. He did not mean merely in our physical nature,—though that was true, as many a poor drunkard's frame and countenance testified;—but in our whole nature, mental and moral, as well as physical. We were what the past had made us. He who indulged evil passions in youth, was their victim for life—he who indulged in excesses, had their record written upon every power of his body and soul. Everything we did left its mark, and no words of warning were more terribly correct than these: "Be not deceived, God is not mocked: whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." It was thought by many that a man might go on in vice and folly as long as he chose, and reform when he liked.—This was a great mistake. There was no power in man to turn or to reform. The longer he indulged in any evil propensity, the stronger it became, and the weaker grew counteracting forces. In the course he had chosen he must, therefore, go on,

for ever getting worse and worse, unless arrested by Divine grace; and it was this consideration which gave him but little confidence in reforms which did not grow out of a change of heart. That, indeed, made all things new, and enabled a man to alter his course completely—to take a new departure—to enter upon a different voyage—to lead a new life,—and this change every one might seek and obtain now; but the longer men deferred to do so, the more improbable would any change become. He entreated, therefore, any heavy-laden, sin-stricken souls present, who knew they were on the wrong road, to feel the responsibility of giving themselves up to Jesus at once, and entering upon a new life from this day forward. This was the duty of the present, and if performed, the future would grow better and better, and brighter and brighter forever.—Speech of Rev. Mr. Marsh, Quebec.

APHORISMS FOR PREACHERS.—The same truths uttered from the pulpit by different men, or by the same man in different states of feeling will produce very different effects. Some of these are far beyond what the bare conviction of the truth, so uttered, would ordinarily produce. The whole mass of truth, by the sudden passion of the speaker, is made *red hot*, and burns its way.

It is impossible to close a sermon well, that is warmly, unless the train of thought has been so conducted as to bring the heart into a *glow*, which increases to the end.

Having chosen a subject, it is well to think over it deeply, day and night, and to read on it carefully before putting pen to paper. Take few notes, but as far as may be, let the matter digest itself in the mind.

To be worth much, a sermon must begin like a river; and flow, and widen, and roughen, and deepen, until the end; and when it reaches this end, *it is hurt by every syllable that is added.*—Dr. J. W. Alexander.

THE TWO ALABASTER BOXES.

"A woman in the city, which was a sinner, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and anointed His feet."

"Being in Bethany, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard, very precious, and she brake the box, and poured it on His head."

When Thou, in patient ministry,
Didst pass a stranger through Thy land,
Two costly gifts were offer'd Thee,
And both were from a woman's hand.

To Thee, who madest all things fair,
Twice fair and precious things they bring,
Pure sculptur'd alabaster clear,
Perfumes for earth's anointed king.

Man's hasty lips would both reprove,
One for the stain of too much sin,
One for the waste of too much love;
Yet both avail'd Thy smile to win.

The saint, who listen'd at Thy feet,
The sinner, sinners scorn'd to touch,
Adoring in Thy presence meet,
Both pardon'd and both loving much.

Thus evermore to all they teach,
Man's highest style is "much forgiven,"
And that earth's lowest yet may reach
The highest ministries of heaven.

They teach that gifts of costliest price
From hearts sin-beggar'd yet may pour;
And that love's costliest sacrifice
Is worth the love, and nothing more.

II.

Love is the true economist,
Her weights and measures pass in heaven;
What others lavish on the feast,
She to the Lord himself hath given;

Love is the true economist,
She through all else to him hath sped,
And unprov'd His feet hath kiss'd,
And spent her ointments on his head.

Love is the true economist,
She breaks the box, and gives her all;
Yet not one precious drop is miss'd,
Since on His head and feet they fall.

In all her fervent zeal no haste,
She at His feet sits glad and calm,
In all her lavish gifts no waste,
The broken vase but frees the balm.

Love is the truest providence,
Since beyond time her gold is good,
Stamp'd for man's mean "three hundred
pence,"
With Christ's "Sinner's" seal what she
could."

Love is the best economist

In what she sows and what she reaps;
She lavishes her all on Christ,
And in His, all her being sleeps.

—*The Three Waking and other Poems.*

A REVIVAL.

Read **MATT.** iii. 5, 6; **LUKE** iii. 10, 14.

There is something unique and picturesque about the whole history and character of the Baptist. Travellers at this day, in the little-frequented defiles, the rugged ravines, around the Jordan rapids, describe the remarkable dress and appearance of the Bedouins or Dervishes, with their bronzed skins, and the striped Bedouin cloak or blanket, rudely woven of camel's hair, fastened with a leathern girdle round their bodies;—their homes either the caves and grottoes of the wilderness, or a rustic arbour or canopy formed of branches stripped from the abundant trees around;—their food the wild fruits of the mountain, the honey found in the rocks, or the nutritious manna exuding from the tamarisk.

We cannot wonder that these modern pictures should be suggestive of the olden scene which attracted wondering thousands to the inaccessible glens of eastern Palestine to listen to John's message. They formed a strange and heterogeneous assemblage. There were rough boors, unlettered peasants and fishermen, from northern Galilee. There were stern Roman soldiers from the barracks of Herod Antipas; others from Damascus, on their way to measure swords with a lawless Arabian chieftain. These stood, with sheathed weapons, to listen to one heroic as their bravest. There were grasping, avaricious publicans and tax-gatherers, from Jericho and Tiberias, who came, either wearied of their nefarious life, or incited by the novelty of the occasion, to listen to the scourger of their vices. And, stranger than all; Jerusalem, from its Sanhedrim, pours forth its phylacteried representatives; the Pharisee (the high churchman of his day), the stickler for forms and ritual observances, rubric and ceremony; the Sadducee, the cold scoffing infidel of the age, who looked on the world to come as a devout imagination;—forth they go, many of them, perhaps, with a sneer on their lips; but others, too, impelled by nobler and truer motives. Ay, and more than all, and what stamps a surpassing interest on the scene, there is a *Divine Personage*, then unknown and unrecognised, who has come too, from far north Galilee, to listen to His great forerunner, and, in these rapids of the Jordan, to partake of the mysterious ablution. The great temple of nature was a meet sanctuary surely for the

thunder-voice of the new prophet; its walls, the precipices on either side; its canopy, the sky; the worshippers, this mingled congregation of earnest souls,—*brave* men in tears, *hard* men softened, *careless* men arrested; men of business, men of learning, men of public life, all coming forth to hear a preacher of the wilderness, a Bedouin of his day,—one with no priestly consecration, claiming no prophetic succession; his vestments the surplice of the desert,—the rough covering of camel's hair,—and his watchword the rallying cry that brought these many sick hearts around him, "REPENT, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

It was indeed a noble thing to see a man appearing, with heroic heart, to unmask hypocrisy in all its forms and phases, and lash unsparingly the conventional follies, and sins, and vices of the times. The Baptist's was no mere indefinite homily about the evil of sin, in general. He spoke pointedly and personally to every class and every individual, of their dominant passion or lust, whatever it was.—He spoke to the Pharisee of the day, of his resting in forms. He spoke to the soldier of the day, of his spirit of insubordination. He spoke to the publican of the day, of his dishonesty and grasping avarice. He spoke to the court of the day of their dissoluteness, and to the head of that court, of his special sin—"It is not lawful for thee to have her."—But yet, observe in the words before us, he advocated no mystical and unnatural disavowance of man from his work-day world; as if business and religion were antagonistic and incompatible. He enjoins all the classes that came (just as he would enjoin each class among ourselves) to return to their *ordinary occupations*, but only imbued with a new heaven-born spirit; seeking that religion should moderate worldly cares, engrossments, employments, and enjoyments, and leave its sanctifying influence upon all.

To the common people he said, "Go back to the world and your work, and manifest a spirit of brotherly kindness. *He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.*" To the publicans he did not say, "Leave your irreligious toll and custom-houses; give up your gains at Tiberias and Jericho." No! but "Go back! Be tax-gatherers still; only hold the balance of truth in your hand. Scorn all that is mean, base, dishonest! *Exact no more than that which is appointed you.*" To the soldiers he did not say, "Leave that horrid trade of war; throw down your commissions; cast sword and scabbard into the depths of Jordan, and live lives of hermit seclusion on its banks."—No; but, "Go forward through the Ghor in

your present warlike mission against the desert chief of Petra. Be brave, and good, and true. Temper your heroic deeds with mercy to the vanquished. Set a noble example of obedience and subordination to your superior officers. *Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely, and be content with your wages.*"

Here is the honest, outspoken boldness of a man of God, and yet one who took broad and noble and generous views of existence, and its duties. Would that we thus sought more thoroughly to incorporate religion with every-day life, and have all interfused with the fear, and love, and favour of God! Would that we felt more that the grand problem, which we as Christians have to solve, is to be *in* the world, and not *of* it; and that thousands on thousands in our thoroughfares would listen to his monitory voice, expressed in the words of a kindred spirit:—"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

—[Macduff.

PRAYER IS THE SECRET OF EML- NENT HOLINESS.

Without controversy there is a vast difference among true Christians. There is an immense interval between the foremost and the hindermost in the army of God.

They are all fighting the same good fight;—but how much more valiantly some fight than others! They are all doing the Lord's work;—but how much more some do than others! They are all light in the Lord;—but how much more brightly some shine than others! They are all running the same race;—but how much faster some get on than others! They all love the same Lord and Saviour;—but how much more some love him than others! I ask any true Christian whether this is not the case. Are not these things so?

There are some of the Lord's people who seem never able to get on from the time of their conversion. They are born again, but they remain babes all their lives. They are learners in Christ's school, but they never seem to get beyond A B C, and the lowest form.—They have got inside the fold, but there they lie down and get no further. Year after year you see in them the same old besetting sins. You hear from them the same old experience. You remark in them the same want of spiritual appetite—the same squeamishness about any

thing but the milk of the word, and the same dislike to strong meat—the same childishness—the same feebleness—the same littleness of mind—the same narrowness of heart—the same want of interest in any thing beyond their own little circle, which you remarked ten years ago. They are pilgrims indeed, but pilgrims like the Gibeonites of old—their bread is always dry and mouldy—their shoes always old and clouted, and their garments always rent and torn. I say this with sorrow and grief. But I ask any real Christian, is it not true?

There are others of the Lord's people who seem to be *always getting on*. They grow like the grass after rain. They increase like Israel in Egypt. They press on like Gideon—though sometimes faint, yet always pursuing. They are ever adding grace to grace, and faith to faith, and strength to strength. Every time you meet them, their hearts seem larger, and their spiritual stature bigger, taller and stronger. Every year they appear to see more, and know more, and believe more, and feel more in their religion. They not only have good works to prove the reality of their faith, but they are *zealous* of them. They not only do well, but they are *unwearied* in well-doing. They attempt great things, and they do great things. When they fail they try again, and when they fall they are soon up again. And all this time they think themselves poor unprofitable servants, and fancy they do nothing at all. These are those who make religion lovely and beautiful in the eyes of all. They wrest praise from the unconverted, and win golden opinions even from the selfish men of the world. These are those whom it does good to see, to be with, and to hear. When you meet them, you could believe that, like Moses, they had just come out from the presence of God. When you part with them you feel warmed by their company, as if your soul had been near a fire. I know such people are rare. I only ask, is it not so?

Now, how can we account for the difference which I have just described? What is the reason that some believers are so much brighter and holier than others? I believe the difference in nineteen cases out of twenty arises from different habits about private prayer. I believe that those who are not eminently holy pray *little*, and those who are eminently holy pray *much*.

I dare say this opinion will startle some readers. I have little doubt that many look on eminent holiness as a kind of special gift, which none but a few must pretend to aim at. They admire it at a distance in books. They think it beautiful when they see an example near themselves. But as to its being a thing within the reach of any but a very few, such

a notion never seems to enter their minds.—In short, they consider it a kind of monopoly granted to a few favoured believers, but certainly not to all.

Now I believe that this is a most dangerous mistake. I believe that spiritual, as well as natural greatness, depends far more on the use of means within everybody's reach, than on any thing else. Of course I do not say we have a right to expect a miraculous grant of intellectual gifts. But this I do say, that when a man is once converted to God, whether he shall be eminently holy or not, depends chiefly on his own diligence in the use of God's appointed means. And I assert confidently, that the principal means by which most believers have become great in the Church of Christ, is the habit of *diligent private prayer*.

Look through the lives of the brightest and best of God's servants, whether in the Bible or not. See what is written of Moses, and David, and Daniel, and Paul. Mark what is recorded of Luther and Bradford, the Reformers. Observe what is related of the private devotions of Whitfield, and Cecil, and Venn, and Bickersteth, and M'Cheyne. Tell me of one of all the goodly fellowship of saints and martyrs, who has not had this mark most prominently—he was a *man of prayer*. Oh! reader, depend upon it, prayer is power.

Prayer obtains fresh and continued outpourings of the Spirit. He alone begins the work of grace in a man's heart. He alone can carry it forward and make it prosper.—But the good Spirit loves to be entreated.—And those who ask most, will always have most of His influence.

Prayer is the surest remedy against the devil and besetting sins. That sin will never stand firm which is heartily prayed against. That devil will never long keep dominion over us which we beseech the Lord to cast forth. But then we must spread out all our case before our heavenly Physician if He is to give us daily relief. We must drag our indwelling devils to the feet of Christ, and cry to Him to send them back to the pit.

Reader, do you wish to grow in grace and be a very holy Christian? Be very sure, if you wish it, you could not have a more important question than this—Do you *PRAY*? —[J. C. Ryle.

There is something unutterably sweet in the consideration of the jealousy of God—that *He* should so regard the affections of his child as to be jealous of occupying the second place!

AMONG THIEVES.

M. Kothen was a Swede, and though educated among Protestants, he neither knew by experience his own misery nor the grace of God. Like many others, he followed tranquilly the broad way which leads to destruction, persuading himself that God would never condemn an honest man like him. But God possesses hidden and sufficient means to rouse a man from his false security, and to show to him the dangerous state of his soul. Sickness, storms, earthquakes, angels, or even thieves, all may become the means of converting souls; the example of M. Kothen presents an extraordinary proof of this.

One day that he had to go from Stockholm to Aboin, he hired a little boat with sails. The hour of departure come, he embarked; a fresh breeze from the north-west filled the sails, and Kothen, without paying much attention to the little assuring countenances of the crew, congratulated himself at the rapid headway of the little vessel. But after a little, some significant signs, something evil in the looks of the sailors, in their laughter, in their ironical replies, excited in him some suspicion, and he drew near to listen to their talk. They spoke the Finnish language, which they believed their passenger did not understand.

Let us throw him into the water.

We could say, added another, that not being accustomed to the movements of the vessel, he tried to advance too far to the bow, and while we were busy at the poop, he fell into the water, and we never saw him more.

But they couldn't agree. They resolved at last to leave him on a neighbouring rock, where an old woman lived who hid the products of their depredations.

While his fate was being discussed, Kothen felt for the first time the anguish of a soul which finds itself forced to look death in the face without the peace which the gospel gives. In the moment of danger the creature turns instinctively to its Creator, and for the first time Kothen began to pray to Him who was able to save Him from death.

Arrived at the shore of the little island, the pirates cast anchor, and landed near a hut from which an old woman came out, whom they called "Mother."

This, they said to her in presenting to her their prisoner, with an air of respect; 'This is a gentleman who is a preacher; you should have great pleasure in seeing him. Is it not true, mother?'

Thank you, my sons, replied the old woman; it is many years since I heard a sermon; tomorrow is just Sunday, and I hope we shall have one.

They forced thus their unhappy prisoner to

undertake the office of a minister. Invested thus unwillingly with an ecclesiastical character, contrary to his usual feelings, Kothen's heart began to sink. He did not wish to destroy an error which might become the means of his safety. On the other hand he had never exhorted any one on religious matters, much less a band of pirates. He passed a long and sleepless night. The number of the thieves was further increased by the crew of another vessel. The pretended preacher arose early in the morning and went out of the cabin, seeking to collect his thoughts that he might prepare for his audience, while these rude and wicked people put on their best clothes, prepared the place and the seats, and called the preacher.

The poor man looked as if walking to the gallows. It was then that he turned with all the strength of his soul to the Lord, beseeching Him not to forsake him in this extremity, and he soon felt that his prayer was heard. A feeling of peace and love, till then unknown to him, put an end to all his anguish. God pities the sinner; He will have mercy on me. Such an assurance inspired him also with a deep sympathy for these lost men, who had formed the project of putting him to death. His heart was so much stirred that he could not fail to move others. With tears in his eyes he spoke to them about the corruption of the human heart—of the terrible consequences which awaited them if they died impenitent. Then he exhorted them to give themselves to Christ, to believe in the Saviour of sinners. As he proceeded, his faith and his power increased. The wickedness of his own heart was revealed to him, but the hope of salvation filled him also with equal efficacy, because his repentance was sincere and his faith in Christ resolute.

His hearers, remembering their own faults, shared the profound emotion of the new preacher. More than one wept in listening to him. The old woman pressed him affectionately in her arms when he finished, and ordered that a boat should take him with all he had to the town of Aboin.

The feeling of having been so miraculously delivered by the grace of God did not rest without effect upon him. He decided to live from that time forward for him who had saved him, and when he had moved his residence to Marseilles, he contributed much to edify believers by the example of his Christian piety.

Reader, have you ever cried to God in your distress in order to be delivered? Have you ever asked pardon and obtained what you asked? Do you know by experience that Jesus Christ is come to seek and to save that which was lost? If so, do not forget to edify

others and cause the light of your good works to shine in the world. If not, ask it to-day, at this moment while you read this article, in order that you may be saved.—*Translated from the Buona Novella.*

Sabbath School Lessons.

November 24th.

JACOB'S VISION AND VOW.

GEN. XXVIII. 10-22.

1. *Jacob's parting with his parents.*—No sooner had Jacob obtained the blessing than he had to flee for his life from his father's house. He, upon whom so great a blessing had been pronounced, had to become, for a time, a poor, homeless, and friendless wanderer. Departing from his father's roof, in such a plight, how little had he the appearance of him who was to be the father of nations, who was the beloved of God, and from whom the Messiah was to spring! Such an inconsistency we often observe between the privileges and prospects of the children of God, and their condition in this life. By passing his people through the furnace of afflictions, the Lord purifies them from their dross; Mal. iii. 3. He thus manifests his love of their persons and hatred of their sins. To remove any doubt which might be in the mind of Jacob as to the validity of the blessing which he had already obtained, from the fact that his father had bestowed it upon him unwittingly, Isaac again confers it upon him before sending him away. Isaac "blessed him and charged him." Every blessing promised by our heavenly Father is accompanied with a charge. Would we be partakers of the benefits purchased by Christ for his people? We must believe on Him. Would we be his disciples? We must take up our cross and follow Him.

2. *The worldly policy of Esau.*—Esau observing that his father had dismissed Jacob with the injunction not to marry from among the daughters of Canaan, but to take a wife of the daughters of Laban, his mother's brother, thought to ingratiate himself with his parents, by also connecting himself with the family of Abraham. He therefore "took unto the wives which he had Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife;" ver. 9. By this act, however, he allied himself with a family which God had rejected, and seems to have been actuated by no higher motive than that of superseding the absent Jacob in the affections of his parents. He also retained his former wives. How many are those who would thus, like Esau, unite themselves to Christ, and re-

tain their pristine idols; who love the rewards of the righteous, but grudge the sacrifice of their favourite sins! But they that seek the Lord must do so with their whole heart; Ps. cxix. 2. Many, too, like Esau, seek to remedy their errors when it is too late; Num. xiv. 40; Matt. xxv. 10.

3. *Jacob's dream.*—"And Jacob lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night because the sun was set;" ver. 11. The place he reached was probably some grove, in which he would be sheltered by the trees. There he slept on the ground, and took of the stones of the place for a pillow. This mode of resting is apt to excite our surprise. But a weary man does not require a feather-bed on which to repose, and that Jacob was fatigued we may well believe, as he had that day travelled forty miles on foot, that being the distance from Beersheba to Bethel. Travellers inform us, too, that in Eastern countries, in which the climate is so different from ours, this mode of passing the night is quite common. The following extract from Dr. Kitto on this subject, may not here be out of place: "The manner of sleeping in warm Eastern climates was and is necessarily very different from that which is followed in our colder regions. The present usages appear to be the same as those of the ancient Jews, and sufficiently explain the passages of Scripture which bear on the subject. Beds of feathers are altogether unknown, and the Orientals lie exceedingly hard. Poor people who have no certain home or when on a journey, or employed distant from their homes, sleep on mats or wrapped in their outer garment, which, from its importance in this respect, was forbidden to be retained in pledge over night from the owner; Gen. ix. 21-23; Exod. xxii. 27; Deut. xxv. 13. Under such circumstances, a stone covered with some folded cloth or piece of dress is often used for a pillow." "And he dreamed, and beheld a ladder," &c.; ver. 12. The ladder represented—1st. God's providence: its steps exhibited the gradual way in which he usually brings about events. The angels of God ascended and descended upon it. They ascended to receive God's commands, and descended to put them into execution; Psalm ciii. 20, 21. The Lord stood at the head of the ladder ordering and directing all. Jacob was now the type of the church over which the Lord continually guards; Isa. xxvii. 3. By repeating the blessing already pronounced upon Jacob by his father, the Lord was graciously pleased to grant it his Amen. 2nd. The ladder was also a beautiful emblem of our blessed Saviour, by whom alone guilty man can hold communion with his God, and by whom God can communicate his blessings to man. To the ascending and descending of the

angels upon the ladder our Saviour alludes; John i. 51. The Lord promised to be with Jacob in all places whither he should go, and never to leave him; ver. 15. He never does leave or forsake his people; Heb. xiii. 5. This promise was made not only for Jacob's present but for his future encouragement. Though he himself did not know yet, the Lord foresaw the troubles which Jacob would afterwards encounter from his uncle.

4. *Jacob's vow.*—When Jacob awoke from his sleep, instead of being exalted above measure, "he was afraid and said how awful is this place; this is none other but the house of God and the gate of heaven." Not that the Lord was more present here than elsewhere, but because here he gave Jacob brighter manifestations of his grace than he had ever done hitherto. Jacob changed the name of the place from Luz, which signifies an almond tree to Bethel, which means the house of God; ver. 19. He took the stone that he had used as a pillow, and set it up for a pillar; ver. 18. It is well to keep in mind God's gracious manifestations; Is. xlv. 9. "And Jacob vowed a vow," &c.; ver. 20. This vow was tantamount to saying, "seeing that the Lord has made me these gracious promises, therefore the Lord will be my God." Thus did Jacob improve these benefits by solemnly dedicating himself to the service of the Lord. Mark the moderation of his desires—if he had bread to eat and raiment to put on, he would therewith be content.—See Prov. xxx. 8; 1 Tim. vi. 8. He devoted the tenth part of his substance to the Lord: a very fit proportion, though it may be made more according to circumstances.

Lessons—1st. All who follow the Lord will have more or less to endure affliction; John xvi. 33; Acts xiv. 22.

2nd. The Lord, by extraordinary manifestations of his grace, supports and encourages his people under their tribulations; 2 Cor. i. 4.

3rd. We should manifest our gratitude for the gracious benefits which we receive of the Lord by dedicating ourselves to his service; Ps. cxvi. 13; Rom. xii. 1.

December 1st.

THE HEALING OF THE WITHERED HAND.—LUKE VI. 11.

1. "And it came to pass also on another Sabbath that he entered into the synagogue and taught;" ver. 6. According to His usual practice, because there was generally the greatest concourse of people, and because it was necessary that in all things he should be an example to his people.

2. "And there was a man whose right hand was withered." Probably this man had gone thither for the purpose of learning the vivify-

ing doctrines of our Lord, rather than with any expectation of being healed of his bodily ailment. If we would be healed by Christ, we must wait upon him in the way of his ordinances.

3. "And the Scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the Sabbath-day; that they might find an accusation against him." With what awful motives did they go up to the house of God. Not to profit by the instructions of Him "who spake as never man spake," but as his mortal enemies, to watch his every word and action. Their earnest desire was, that they might find even the shadow of a pretext to bring again at him a criminal accusation, and encompass his death. This malice they took care not to avow, but like the lion watching for his prey, they sought to entrap the Saviour unawares. Vain, however, was their silence; our Saviour, to whom there is nothing hid, read their thoughts. So far, however, from being afraid of his blood-thirsty and unrelenting enemies, boldly confronting them, "he said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst;" ver. 8. This command was given to his patient by the Saviour to try his faith, and also to give all publicity to his act, and thus to show that no opposition of his enemies could for a moment make him shrink from doing good. We have reason to pray for grace at all times, and more especially in times of persecution, to be enabled to imitate this illustrious example.

4. "Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing: Is it lawful on the Sabbath-day to do good, or to do evil? to save life or to destroy it?" By these pointed interrogatories, the Lord appealed both to the natural law of God, which is written in the heart of every man, and to His revealed will. He thus silenced his enemies, and put them to open shame.

5. "And looking round about upon them all, he said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand;" ver. 10. It is remarkable that the miraculous cures performed by our Lord on the bodies of his patients are typical of the cures he performs on sin-sick souls. The way, for example, in which the miracle under our consideration was performed, may serve to obviate a difficulty brought forward by many when urged to close with the offer of the Gospel. "If faith," say they, "be the gift of God, it is in vain to enjoin us to believe, for we cannot do so till God gives us the power." But thus did not reason the poor man with the withered hand. Believing that he who gave him the command would also grant him power to perform, he stretched forth his hand, and it was restored whole as the other. And thus has every believing soul received the Saviour. Instead of rejecting the

Lord with vain objections, our duty is at once to believe while we bless that Saviour, who enables us to do so.

5. "And they were filled with madness, and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus;" ver. 11. What an awful thing it is when the blessings of God have quite an opposite effect on the heart from what they are intended to have—when they are "a savour of death unto death," instead of "a savour of life unto life." Instead of having their hearts filled with love and gratitude to Jesus for his goodness to sinful and suffering man, their hearts were filled with malice against Him. They endeavoured to discover some other way by which they might destroy Him. We know not which excites our wonder most—the wickedness of the enemies of our Lord, or His long-suffering towards them.

Learn—1st. That works of mercy are lawful on the Sabbath; Luke xiv. 5.

2nd. That there is no commandment given us by Christ, which he has not also promised to give us power to perform; Ezek. xviii. 31, together with Ezek. xxxvi. 26.

3rd. The wickedness of the persecutors of Christ; Luke ii. 39.

4th. That as Christ was patient and forbearing towards his enemies, so ought we to be towards them who injure us; Heb. xii. 3.

December 8th.

JACOB WRESTLING.—GEN. XXII.

1. *Jacob's meeting with the angels.*—"And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him;" ver. 1. We have abundant proof from Scripture, that the angelic hosts continually guard the people of God. Though to human eye they are invisible, yet Jacob was permitted to see them in order to encourage him in this time of his trial. Returning home after many years of absence, he yet had everything to fear at the hand of a man so rash, so resentful, and impulsive as Esau his brother. For aught Jacob knew, even time itself might have wrought no change on Esau's evil passions, which had before caused him to flee for his life from his paternal roof. How strong then must have been his consolation, when he was enabled to see that he and his company were surrounded by the holy angels. Happy they who, having crossed the Jordan of death, shall be met and welcomed to their heavenly home by the angels of God. To preserve the remembrance of the favour here vouchsafed him, Jacob called the place "*Mahanaim*," two hosts or two camps.

2. *Jacob's message to Esau.*—How humble was this message. Though Jacob had by purchase obtained the birthright, and the dominion was conveyed at least to his seed

by the paternal blessing, he addresses his brother as his superior, styling him lord; ver. 4. He tells his brother, with whom he had been sojourning, and also informs him of the prosperity with which he had been blessed in his worldly affairs; ver. 5. Jacob also begs his brother's favour. Thus should we seek by mild and humble demeanour to conciliate our enemies.

3. *The report of his brother's warlike preparations brought to him by the messengers.*—Instead of reciprocating his brother's kindness, Esau came forth to meet Jacob with four hundred men. Some believe that this parade of his followers was merely intended by Esau to welcome Jacob. From what we know, however, of the character of Esau, and from the effect of the report of the messengers upon Jacob, it is evident that the purposes of the former were of a violent nature. Jacob was not a man to be afraid of shadows, and it is said that he was greatly afraid and distressed. Such a fear is perfectly compatible with strong faith. The spirit may be strong when the flesh is weak. Jacob, however, did not lose his presence of mind, but, with his usual prudence, divided his company into two bands, "And said, if Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape;" ver. 8.

4. *Jacob's prayer.*—Not content with the precautions which he had taken, Jacob implores the protection of his God, without whose gracious aid he knew all the means he had employed, or might employ, for the safety of himself and his company were in vain. 1st. He implores God's protection in his return, as he had undertaken it in accordance with the Divine command. 2nd. Instead of murmuring or repining at his present circumstances, he humbly confesses himself unworthy of the least of the mercies which the Lord had conferred upon him. 3rd. Specially does he pray for deliverance from the hand of his brother. Note, we should lay our wants specifically before our Heavenly Father. Let us not think them too commonplace: in all that concerns His people he is concerned. 4th. Jacob pleads the promises; ver. 13.

5. *The further means employed by Jacob for appeasing his brother.*—He sent Esau a most liberal present—viz., five hundred and eighty cattle. A gift often makes room for a man; Prov. xviii. 16. This present he divided into several droves, each of which he committed to the charge of a servant, who should deliver to Esau a most humble and conciliatory message; vers. 17, 18. Thus while Jacob supplicated Divine protection, he employed every means of safety which he could devise. This affords us a beautiful illustration of the perfect compatibility between the Divine assistance and human effort.

6. *Jacob wrestles with the angel.*—Having sent his two wives, his two women-servants, and his eleven sons, over the ford Jabbok for

their greater security, Jacob was left alone: "and there wrestled a man with him till the breaking of the day;" ver. 24. That this man was the Lord Jesus Christ, is evident from the fact that Jacob afterwards named the place Peniel, i.e., the face of God, for, said he, I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. This wrestling was a lively type of earnest prayer, that holy violence alluded to in Matt. xi. 12. Over this man Jacob prevailed. Be astonished, O ye heavens, a worm has power to prevail with Omnipotence. Sometimes everything seems to be against the Christian, even God himself seems to hide his face and be against him, but the result soon shows that our Gracious Father will withhold no good thing from his praying and wrestling children. As a proof that he had gained the victory by no strength of his own, by a touch from the man with whom he had wrestled, the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint. It is only by God's own power, by the Spirit helping our infirmities, and making intercession for us (Rom. viii. 26), that we can hope to prevail. Hosca informs us that prayers and tears were the weapons with which Jacob prevailed with the angel. With holy importunity, Jacob exclaimed, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me;" and as the reward of his faith, and as an encouragement to his children in all ages to imitate his example, his name was changed from Jacob (supplanter), to Israel (prince with God), for, said the angel, as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed; ver. 28. Whoever has power to prevail with God, will also be able to prevail with man so far as God sees meet. By the power of the Almighty, who can change the purposes of all men as He will, the feelings of Esau towards Jacob were entirely changed. Jacob also obtained the blessing which he had so importunately sought; ver. 29.

Learn—1st. That human effort is quite consistent with Divine assistance.—See conjunctly John v. 40 and John vi. 44.

2nd. That the more earnest and importunate the prayers of his people, the more God is glorified.—John xv. 8.

3rd. That sometimes even God himself seems to combat against his people.—Job xix. 11.

4th. But that, eventually, the tokens of Divine favour, in answer to prayer, infinitely exceed our desires.—Eph. iii. 20.

THE LAST READING.

In one of the coal mines of England, a youth about fifteen, years of age, was working by the side of his father, who was a pious man, and governed and educated his family according to the Word of God. The father was in the habit of carrying

with him a small pocket Bible, and the son who had received one at the Sunday-school, imitated the father in this. Thus he always had the sacred volume with him; and whenever he enjoyed a season of rest from labour, he read it by the light of his lamp. They worked together in a newly opened section of the mine, and the father had just stepped aside to procure a tool, when the arch above them suddenly fell between them, so that his father supposed his child to be crushed. He ran toward the place and called to his son, who at length responded from under a dense mass of earth and coal.

"My son," cried the father, "are you living?"

"Yes, father, but my legs are under a rock."

"Where is your lamp, my son?"

"It is still burning."

"What will you do, my dear son?"

"I am reading my Bible, father, and the Lord strengthens me."

These were the last words of that Sunday scholar; he was soon suffocated.

Sun of my soul! Thou Saviour dear,
It is not night if thou be near:
Oh, may no earth-born cloud arise,
To hide thee from thy servant's eyes,
When with dear friends sweet talk I hold,
And all the flowers of life unfold;—
Let not my heart within me burn,
Except in all I Thee discern.
When the soft dews of kindly sleep,
My wearied eyelids gently steep,
Be my last thought, how sweet to rest
For ever on my Saviour's breast.
Abide with me from morn till eve,
For without thee I cannot live:
Abide with me when night is nigh,
For without thee I dare not die.
If some poor wandering child of thine
Have spurned, to-day, the voice divine;
Now, Lord, the gracious work begin,
Let him no more lie down in sin.
Watch by the sick; enrich the poor
With blessings from thy boundless store:
Be every mourner's sleep to-night
Like infant's slumbers, pure and light.
Come near, and bless us when we wake,
Ere through the world our way we take;
Till in the ocean of thy love
We lose ourselves in heaven above.

THE HAPPY DEATH OF THE SABBATH SCHOLAR.

In a town on the south-east coast of Scotland a remarkable revival of religion began in 1859, and it is still yielding blessed result. The providence of God has co-operated with the gifts and means of His grace in prolonging, extending, and deepning the religious awakening. During this period there has been a number of deaths, some of them in circumstances peculiarly affecting. This has produced a deep impression of the nearness of eternity, and an awe-inspiring realization of the greatness of its concerns. Last spring a lingering fever prevailed, and many were in considerable danger, but we have heard of only one death. It was that of a Sabbath scholar, only nine years of age. When we visited the town about a month after her death, we found that both teachers and scholars spoke of the event with much interest and tenderness of feeling. She seems to have been of a very amiable disposition, and to have secured the affection of all who knew her. For three weeks she was feeble, and apparently unconscious and never spoke a word. On the day of her death she recovered consciousness, and said in a low tone to her mother,—

"I'm going away."

Her mother thought that her mind was probably still wandering, and, to try her, she asked, "Where are you going, Elizabeth?"

She calmly and sweetly replied, "I'm going to Jesus."

"How do you know that, my dear?—Are you sure of it?"

"O yes! I am sure of it, for Jesus says, 'I love them that love Me, and they that seek Me early shall find Me;' and you know, mother, that I love Jesus."

She was too weak to say much more; but, immediately before her death, she repeated the following verse of a favourite hymn,—

"Jesus, lover of my soul!
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the raging billows roll,
"While the tempest still is high!
Hide me, O my Saviour hide,
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the heaven guide;
O receive my soul at last!"

In a low tone, and with some difficulty, she uttered the last line,—

"O receive my soul at last!"

and, almost immediately afterwards, calmly fell asleep in Jesus.

Her mother related to me the above conversation, with a few additional particulars. She misses her much, but feels unspeakable comfort in the sure hope that her darling child is now with the Saviour whom she so much loved on earth. The heavenly home has now peculiar attractions to her, and she often thinks of the Redeemer's throne and the happy throng around it. She felt the truth of her daughter's words, and she can never forget them,—**"YOU KNOW, MOTHER, THAT I LOVE JESUS."**

A FAVOURITE OF FORTUNE.

"Oh, if I were rich, how happy I should be! I would live in a fine house, keep many servants, live luxuriously, move in aristocratic circles, and be perfectly happy, I know I should."

Thus spoke a poor young man to himself one day, as he sat beneath a tree, musing on his poverty and the hardness of his lot. And thus speak thousands of young hearts as they look over the stage of life and behold the glare and dazzle of life among the wealthy and the gay. In fact, young hearts have always spoken thus, and I suppose they always will, because foolishness is the heritage of young hearts, the wide world over.

Now let an old man speak—an old man who moved in the highest circles of fashion, tasted all sorts of pleasure, lived prosperously, and rarely writhed beneath the grip of serious trials. Having risen to the height of his ambition, and while in the full enjoyment of a healthy old age, Goethe, the poet, tells us how much real happiness, wealth, and worldly good can yield. With the memory of seventy-five years of life in his heart, this is his testimony. He says:—

"I have often been praised as an **ESPECIAL FAVOURITE OF FORTUNE**, and I will not myself complain. *But at the bottom there has been nothing but trouble and labour; and I can well say that in my whole five-and-seventy years, I have not had four weeks of real pleasure.* It was the eternal rolling of a stone, that had always to be lifted up again for a new start."

Less than four weeks of real pleasure in seventy-five years! "O world of wealth and quiet, if that is all thou canst yield thy most favoured child, thou art a poor master! **Let**

who will follow thee, I will not. I like not thy wages. Give me Jesus, for his service will yield a lifetime of spiritual delight, with pleasures for evermore!"

Such, O young man, should be the decision of thy heart in presence of Goethe's confession. If it really be so, give me thy hand. Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. Press into it! Its gates will open to the resolute knocking of the praying heart.—*Good News.*

THE FARTHING FOUNDATION.

A little boy once attended a missionary meeting, and was much interested with the speeches. When he got home he tried to think what he could do to help the missions, and could think of nothing that seemed of much importance. He was very young, and he felt he must live many years before he would be able to speak much for this great cause. He was very poor, and all he had seemed worth nothing, as he thought of the pounds and shillings of others. His whole wealth consisted of a solitary farthing which somebody had given him. It was a beautiful farthing, but it was only a farthing, and of what use could it be? At last he resolved to send it to the minister that had most interested him by his speech at the meeting. The minister had come from London, and the little boy thought he had better put the farthing in a letter, and send it to him by post. He folded it up nicely in a piece of paper, and wrote a little letter with it, something like this:

"DEAR SIR,—I am but a very little boy, and am very poor. My father and mother can give me nothing to send to the Missionary Society, and I have only a farthing of my own. Still I want to give something, so I send this farthing to you. G. B. S."

Away went the letter, and great was the delight of the gentleman on getting it. He was then going to visit Scotland, to hold missionary meetings, so he took the farthing and the letter with him. Wherever he held a meeting, there he showed the farthing, and read the letter. Everybody was pleased. The little people especially were stirred up by it to try to raise some money, and ere the gentleman got back to London, the little boy's solitary farthing had gained above *three hundred dollars.*

CHRIST'S SCHOOL—THE GREAT LESSON TAUGHT IN IT.

There is one word which the Great Teacher is day by day putting before every pupil in the school of Christ. From the youngest to the oldest, each and all are poring over the same word. Whatever part of the book you may turn to; peep over the shoulder of any scholar you may; amid all the variety of teaching they are subjected to there, there still stands uppermost, foremost, most prominent, the one word—that word, reader, is *grace*; rich, free, sovereign GRACE. None are perfected in it, nor are any weary of it. There is a life and a liveliness in it. So that whether it be the little tiny one that is just admitted to the school, is scarcely high enough to sit upon the very lowest form, but is more commonly found crouching upon the floor, and occupying himself with arranging the letters from the alphabet box that has been put before him; or whether it be the senior pupil, who has gone through every class, and passed upward through every grade in the school, both the one and the other are engaged upon the same word—*grace*, rich, and free, and sovereign GRACE. You read it upon the walls in every variety of language. It is stamped upon every copy-book. The little one that is pencilling upon the slate, and the bigger boy who is tastefully tracing his ornamental letters—both are, letter by letter, bringing out the word G-R-A-C-E. Go to the lower class, the teacher is sure to have the word *grace* upon his lips, and looking for the little one to spell it; go to the upper class—the boy is giving the root and derivation as well as the express meaning of the word—that word is sure to be—GRACE. Let the books be closed, the exercises laid aside, the pupils be directed to stand up and sing, the burden of their song is without doubt the same great word in some such terms as these:—

- "Grace! 'tis a charming sound,
Harmonious to the ear!
Heaven with the echo shall resound,
And all the earth shall hear.
- "Grace first contrived the way
To save rebellious man;
And all the steps that grace display,
Which drew the wondrous plan.
- "Grace first inscribed my name
In God's eternal book;
'Twas grace that gave me to the Lamb,
Who all my sorrows took.
- "Grace led my roving feet
To tread the heavenly road;
And new supplies, each hour, I meet
While pressing on to God.
- "Grace taught my soul to pray,
And made my eyes o'erflow;
'Twas grace which kept me to this day,
And will not let me go.
- "Grace all the work shall crown,
Through everlasting days,
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

WHAT IS REVIVAL?

"Wilt thou not revive us again?"—Ps. lxxxv. 6.
 "They shall revive as corn, and grow as the vine."—Hosea xiv. 7 (margin, *blossom*).
 "Blow upon my garden, that spices may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits."—Cant. iv. 16.

What is "Revival?" Solemn question! Let you and I, dear reader, consider what the word implies in its true sense, for there exists a mine of wealth in even words. To "revive" naturally presupposes that vitality at one period had certainly existed. Who would attempt to use this word with any sort of propriety to a stone, which is cold, barren, and unimpressible, and ever will be so? Nothing can give it life. Yet if we regard the dry bones in some decayed cemetery, we may apply the word revive in fullest assurance that one day those barren emblems of mortality will arise at the bidding of Him who called into being their wondrous mechanism, and they will be revived with the spirit of a new existence, and with fullness of life. It only awaits the will of an Almighty being to bring into shape and motion every separate piece, making a new and perfect body. This is, indeed, a work of Omnipotence. But there is a greater wonder still when the soul, once steeped in sin and forgetfulness of God, is made to exhibit every new grace, and becomes fruitful unto every good word and work. Both are stupendous works of Deity, but the latter is to work with an energy and unceasing love in the heart of man, which is, alas! leagued against itself with devils, until it revives from its previous ruin, and, with new power, turns unto God. But let us be wary in the application of the term "revive us," for this implies, as we said, some previous vitality in the soul; that it was not utterly without life. That it possessed still some distinctive characteristics of the true believer, and but awaited the dews of God's grace to flourish anew, and be as the sweet spices for fragrance. "A revival" clearly points to the awakened Church as it exists in Christ. "One shall be taken, another left." But we cannot call that a "revival" in individuals of whom there had previously been no life. Rather the very reverse. Deaf to all the pleadings of friends and faithful preachers, until awakened by the call of Him whose voice opened the tomb of Lazarus, the frightened soul asks "What shall I do to be saved?" And there is life! It is from thence we must date the revival of our graces. For if the soul really be aroused to a sense of its spiritual death, it will cry mightily, and that continually, "Lord, revive thy work." For it is the work of Omnipotence, from first to last, to new create, as well as maintain the life of the soul, God by his Spirit working in us to will and to do of his good pleasure! Herein lies the essence

of a "revival." The new heart, and with the new heart new tastes, desires, and aversions will spring as the necessary consequence of the "new birth." It will be a new birth unto holiness. "Behold I make all things new," saith the Lord of life, "Ye are henceforth bone of my bone, very members incorporate with my life—I the root, ye the branches." Can anything be plainer or more practical in its influences on the life and conversation of such as are renewed in the spirit of their minds?

We will examine this. Lest, while having "a name to live," we be yet dead, and, as in the living body, every member is obedient to walk or run, sit still, or be in motion, to the will of its living head, so in like manner should every member of Christ's mystical body be prompt to obey the hidden motions of His Spirit, who moves in all but those who on trial are found "REPROBATE," a word which cannot be sufficiently apprehended, for it implies having been "tried," and found wanting, cast out as "reprobate silver." No more renewal for such as these. Their day is only a filling up of woe-gathering against the great day of the Lord, when He cometh to judge the earth in righteousness. O! for words to express the great mercy of the Lord, who "reviveth" the spirit of the humble. With that humble-minded one the Lord delighteth to dwell, who can but smite upon his breast and cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," while eight times in one chapter our merciful and gracious Saviour pronounces woe upon the uplifted, self-righteous, self-satisfied, self-seekers, who, deeming themselves "the righteous," have no charity for their neighbours, and upon such will descend the real woe, who, believing themselves safe in their own workings, find they had deluded themselves with "a name to live," yet, being dead, and, awaking too late from their profitless phantasies, find the soul lost, forgetting their Lord's warning, "How can ye believe, who have honour one of another." O, dear reader, think of these things. Be satisfied in your own mind. The Spirit witnessing with your spirit that you are a child of God, and then you will have confidence towards God, Christ being found in you, the hope of glory. Heaven will be within you; peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Do you ask what is a "revival?" This is it. It is God in us, already begun upon earth, the very spirit and peace of a believer, in foretaste of the life that shall be passed amidst the spirits of just men made perfect. What an exalted idea does this give us of the company of heaven! all justice, all peace; no divisions, no strife nothing of that temper which now rends Christendom with the strife of party, but like our benignant Lord, all there will be of one mind, in love made perfect. What a glorious liberty for the true worshippers of an ever-present God; no seeking Him in one place more than another, but God, Emmanuel, ever

with us, as even here, we know, among the spiritual worshippers, and the Lord seeketh such to worship Him. These are to be found among the lowly ones, of whom man taketh no count. But God knoweth, and He will manifest them when He cometh to make up His jewels.

O, then, let us, as fellow-believers, cry mightily unto God to revive his own works, and make us willing and obedient, that we may eat of the fruit of the land, and find health to our souls, so shall we be satisfied when we wake up in His image, whose we are, and whom we serve.

THE PRUNED VINE.

"Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."—John xv. 2.

Do you wonder why repeated bereavements, losses, sufferings befall you, till nearly all your life seems cut away? Go look at the vine dresser as he cultivates his vine. For what purpose has he planted the tender shoot? That it may grow strong and sturdy and bring forth abundant fruit! Yet see him after the first year cut back nearly all its growth, and after the second year prune it down again, so year by year cutting it back, never leaving it to its own will in its luxuriance. Why is this? That its sap may be concentrated, its strength matured, its wild straggling exuberance restrained, and a compact growth of rich fruit be perfected. Has the vine bled in vain? Was not the pruner's knife a kindly one?

Eat of the wild grape of the fields, and then of the carefully pruned and cultivated fruit of the garden, and see if there did not concentrate sweetness after every wound.

Yet though Christ says, "I am the vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit," you wonder that you are wounded by God's afflictive hand! See you not that your happiness, your pleasures, your riches, your health, your affections, were the overabundant branches, by whose many clinging tendrils you were attaching yourself to weak earthly supports. Winding, climbing, clinging around these in free natural growth, all your use was lost. Your use in growth is not your own untrained development; it is to bring forth much fruit for the Master's hand.

Be rather thankful that you are not left as the wild vine, unworthy the pruner's knife.

It is the husbandman's *mark of value that he sets upon you.*

"Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it." "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son that he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby."

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