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PEACE A FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT.

A SERMON BY REV. M. WILLIS, D.D. L. L. D.

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Galatians v. 22, 24.

The text forms part of the practical improvement of his subject, which the apostle subjoins to his doctrine. Of that doctrine, as usual in his epistles, the great sum is "grace reigning through righteousness unto eternal life." No where more peremptorily than in this epistle does the sacred writer assert the perfect freeness of grace; no where more clearly attribute our redemption to Christ, or more earnestly guard believers against all self-righteous pretensions. Yet, as is also true of his other epistles, the blessed privileges of the gospel of salvation are shewn to lead to holy living; and sanctification is represented as no less than justification the attendant of faith. In discoursing on the passage, in dependence on God's blessing, it may be profitable to consider the graces of the Christian as here enumerated at large; and secondly to fix attention on one of the fruits of the Spirit. That shall be—"Peace."

My first remark is, that being called "fruits," we are reminded that they are not the grounds of a sinner's justification, but the constituents of the character of the justified. The work of the Spirit is connected with the work of Christ, and presupposes it: He, the Comforter, does not speak of himself; nor does he act of himself. He is sent by the Father and the Son; and he comes, the witness of Christ, and the effective applier of his redemption. Observe, accordingly, how in the very body of this passage, the relation of the spirit to the Son is recognised; for in verse 24, they are said to be "Christ's" who overcome the flesh, or crucify it, with its affections and lusts.

Hence, 2ndly, we remark that as "fruits of the spirit," they are also fruits of Christ, as the vine, the tree of life, and suppose union to Him; since he only who is joined to the Lord, is one Spirit. And it is in virtue of more than a relationship to Christ as a Mediator, or Ransomer that believers possess these graces, or develop these fruits. It is in virtue also of vital relationship to him as a living and life-giving head. The second Adam is a quickening Spirit; and from him in whom all fulness dwells, "all the body by joints and bands, (Col. 2.), having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God."

3rd. We observe that as fruits of the Spirit, these graces and tempers transcend any resemblance of them to be found in natural men. They are different, as nature differs from grace. It is not to be denied that natural virtue may exhibit the goodly appearance of certain dispositions which are the same in name with certain fruits of the Spirit here enumerated. You will find men of loving temperament, charitable, and generous,—though strangers to the love that is of faith. You will find "meekness" characterising some who are not Christ's: you may find them "temperate:" there may also be men of faith, in the sense of "fidelity," (the meaning, some think, in which the word "faith" is, in this passage, to be understood.) Nay; it may even be admitted of some of the children of nature, that being so far happily constituted compared with most men, or having had the benefit of certain ameliorating and refining influences, they develop in their conversation and lives, a

virtue which religious men may well imitate. Perhaps, in some one constituent element of character, the natural man shall be found surpassing the spiritual man. In many cases, he at least rivals him in what is outward or visible. This is more to the shame of the Christian, than it is to the praise of nature; what is attributed to nature, is perhaps due in such instances, to an indirect or secondary influence of grace. But even where meekness, or temperance, or generosity, or good faith may be referred to original temperament, or merely human culture, it will be found in the long run, that the heavenly plant as far excels the earthly, as the work of God does the work of man. "The flesh" and the "Spirit" are still opposites. The nature, so fair and beautiful in some one development, gives forth in other directions its fruits of gall, and clusters of bitterness. There is nothing constant, nothing harmonious, in the characters of unconverted men. Kind to the body, they are cruel to the soul. Generous and honourable to man, they bear enmity to God. Can you call him truly and fully generous, of whom it is true that God is not in all his thoughts, He who gives him all things to enjoy—all his powers of benefitting or profiting his fellow man. The very tender mercies of the wicked are cruel. And you never have a certain hold of the good faith, or the honor, nor of the charity of those, whose consciences have never yet known the blood of sprinkling. Those hearts only are "true hearts" that know the renewing of the Holy Ghost.

Finally, On the passage at large, we remark that though these graces may be unequally developed in different Christians, and certain of them less developed than others in the same Christian, yet they do all belong to the new nature. The renewing, wherever accomplished, is a renewing of the whole man. He may well suspect

his Christianity, who is a stranger to any one of these lineaments of the image of God. And the child of grace who is far behind in any one grace or fruit of the Spirit, is just so far, at least, wanting in one evidence that he is "Christ's."

Let us now consider one of these graces, or fruits—"Peace." This fruit of the Spirit is of unspeakable value, and holds an important place among the privileges and characteristics of every true Christian; as may be seen from the many promises and precepts with which the word of God abounds in relation to it. "Peace on earth" was a note in the song of the heavenly host, when they hailed the Saviour's birth, and congratulated the world on his coming. The Son of God has it for one of his honourable titles—"Prince of peace." "Abundance of peace" is promised as a distinguished consequence of his reign. These and other passages refer, indeed, to peace as an external as well as internal blessing; that is, to peace, not merely as the fruit of the Spirit in the soul, but as denoting our reconciliation to God by the cross of Christ; not so much the feeling of peace, as the state of peace. It denotes, also, in some such passages, peace, as enjoyed among men and nations in opposition to contention and war. Our text leads us to think of internal peace—the peace not of the world generally, but of the soul; not of peace as the work of Christ, accomplished by his doing and dying that he might reconcile us to God, but as the work of the Spirit on the heart—the consequence, indeed, and fruit of the other.

I would consider this Peace, in its nature or source; 2dly in some of its distinguishing properties; 3rdly, in the causes of its interruption occasionally, and the means of its being cherished or regained.

I. Its nature or source: Peace of con-

science may be described as that inward and delightful calm of spirit which proceeds from our sensible or believing views of our being in a state of favour with God, and growing conformity to him. It is altogether a different thing from that security or unconcern which in a false sense may be called peace. Many say peace to themselves when there is no peace, no just or well founded peace of mind.— Through ignorance or the influence of fatal error blinding their minds, they are not disturbed with perplexing fears for their eternal interests. They even die like lambs, when, as has been justly said, if they knew what was before them, they would be roaring like lions. This is what the Scripture calls a being "at ease in Zion;" but, instead of pronouncing such persons happy, the Bible denounces a woe against them. Such false peace may easily be distinguished from that which is the fruit of the spirit. The false separates what God has conjoined.— It says; I shall have peace though I walk in the imagination of my heart, and add drunkenness to thirst. It also shuns self-examination; founded in ignorance or error, it refuses to come to the light lest it should be reprov'd. Not so with the genuine peace. This is only found where the conscience has been enlightened and the judgment informed; where the truth, as it is in Jesus, has been admitted, the sinfulness of the natural condition felt, and the remedy which the Gospel provides savingly apprehended. In short, it is only in the believer in Christ it is found; and follows believing as its fruit. It is a calm this which supposes a storm before it; some degree at least of anxiety and alarm about eternal salvation; and the calm is often greatest where the storm that has preceded it has been greatest. It is not to be found with those who have never had any conviction of their guilt and misery, but in those whose guilt is pardoned, and whose

state, and nature too, is changed. Hence in our excellent shorter catechism, peace of conscience is classed among those benefits which accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification. It flows from justification. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. It is, as it were, the writing on the mind of that deed of pardon by which the believer's sins are all forgiven, and by which he is forever secured from condemnation. God not only passes an act of free, full, and irrevocable forgiveness in behalf of every one who truly accepts the Saviour, but he seals this to the soul, setting it free from the fears of vindictive wrath; so that the believer draws nigh to God with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having his heart purified from an evil conscience. The thoughts of God, which were formerly terrible, are now welcome to the soul. The christian is made to know the blessedness of the man whose iniquities are pardoned and to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity. He hears the voice of his, beloved Saviour as it were saying: "Rise and come away; for lo, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; and the time of the singing of birds is come." How changed the soul in the conscious feeling of reconciliation! Nor is it reconciliation only: peace flows from adoption also; the Spirit witnesseth with our spirits that we are children of God: and the effect is not only to remove the dread of wrath; but to inspire confidence; the soul is disposed to approach to God as a father and to claim him as such. Justified, the believer is delivered from the condemnation; but adopted, he is set free from the spirit of bondage also, and instead of distance and aversion draws near with filial boldness or liberty. From sanctification too the peace we now speak of flows. It may be said to flow especially from this source, when the soul finds a happy satis-

faction in the exercise of grace, or when the Spirit shines upon it in the performance of duty. And thus it is that the more a Christian keeps the divine commandments and perceives an agreement between the law of his mind, and the law of God, the greater is his peace. "Great peace have they who love thy law. In the keeping of the commandments there is this: by the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus; and it is no less than the effect of victorious grace, great reward." Peace in short is obtained, operating within the man, and reducing to a conformity with the divine will all the powers of the soul. It is the kingdom of God within us; righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. How happy the man thus changed! At peace with God, he is at peace with himself; at peace with all men; with all creatures. His soul is in harmony with the order of the universe. Earth, sea, and sky, he finds in all materials where-with to serve God, and helps in praising Him. Whatever he enjoys of the creature has now a double zest, because enjoyed in God. Earth looks greener to his sight and every flower fairer. The sun shines the emblem of a better light—the light now within him. The rains fall, remembrancers of the showers of the Spirit. The rainbow spans the heaven, the token of an everlasting covenant. In the very thunder he hears the whisper of his reconciled father. The most terrible of nature's elements are but the hiding of his power, whose right hand is underneath him and around him. "The very stones of the field are in league with him; the very beasts of the field are at peace with him."

II. We are therefore prepared, secondly, to speak of some of the distinguished excellencies of this peace. It is the "peace of God," it passes understanding—it is independent of the world and its changes.

1. It is the peace of God: so the Apostle calls it. It is of God in its production—

it is of God in its maintenance, it is worthy of God; warranted by him, as resting on grounds he approves. How truly is that the peace of God in whose production all the divine persons are concerned. Here it is attributed to the Holy Ghost; but elsewhere it is traced to the Father. He is the God of peace; the very God of peace; (1 Thess v.). And need I remind you that Christ bestows it, as what is his by right of purchase. "My peace, I give unto you;" John xiv. How truly, not only in respect of its source, but its excellence, is it denominated "the peace of God?" Hence,

2. It passes all understanding—It is like the joy with which a stranger cannot intermeddle. None knoweth it but they who receive it—nor is it without a mysterious character even to them. Flowing from transcendent love, the effect of a transcendent sacrifice—it is itself transcendent—and carries its own evidence of being divine, to the Christian's sense or feeling.—To that we add,

3. It contrasts with mere created good: It is independent of the world and its changes—often enjoyed in its abundance in the absence of all earthly good, or in the seasons when earthly comforters prove most valueless; "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you."

III. This happy state of mind is not always possessed. It has indeed certain elements of stability and permanency; hence called perfect as compared with the world's peace. And we may perhaps best explain the fact of what is called perfect in one place, appearing from the confessions of the saints in other places to be variable or fluctuating, by recurring to what has been set forth under our first head, of the relation of peace to sanctification and adoption, as well as to justification. The righteousness on which the primary privilege

of the believer rests is perfect—it has no flaw—no change—no defect. Hence you may account for the fact that the Christian has constantly, to a certain extent, a satisfaction of mind, a feeling of peace with God, which neither earthly calamities can unsettle, nor sin and temptation dispossess him of: at the same time that being imperfectly sanctified, and imperfectly possessed of the spirit of adoption, he is sometimes heard to sigh as one burdened with a body of death, and to lament after the Lord as one who is cast down, forsaken, walking in darkness, having no light. The fact is undeniable, that the believer while here is militant: his conflict is not ended, nor his full victory won.

It is an important question, how he shall best cherish the peace he has tasted—how regain it, when interrupted, or diminished, or apparently lost. Were we to answer the question summarily in one word, we might say, Invite and cherish the Spirit. The text implies this suggestion—whatever is a fruit of the Spirit must owe its maintenance and perfecting to the same heavenly agent who is concerned in its production. But these subsidiary rules may aid us:—1. Faith, exercised anew and often, may be expected to cherish the happy feeling of security, which it, instrumentally, brought to us at first. Faith, in every view of it, is calculated to recover a soul to spiritual health: since there is no ground or source of peace to which faith has not an important relation.—How, but by believing, are we to renew our access to the peace-speaking blood of Christ? How, but by a believing appropriation of the promises, are we to taste their sweetness? Is it not as receiving the good that is in them—nay, in cleaving to God himself as given in these to be the portion of the soul, that the Christian finds every obstruction to his peace, every temptation to despondency, counteracted, and disarmed of its

power? To faith, in short, the Spirit is promised. Faith is the bond of union and communion with his living Head. Faith, realising things unseen, strips the things seen both of their seducing, and their discouraging influences.

2. Repentance is needful also—repentance, in its frequently renewed exercises. He, that confesseth, and forsaketh sin, shall have mercy. Peace rests on righteousness; and the same eternal law which only justifies on the footing of a righteousness that is perfect, still claims, even when become the law of a reconciled Father, that the child of grace shall walk in love, to walk in joy; shall, while still liable to sin, at least not live in peace with it; while encompassed by the flesh, shall be led by the Spirit. Such is the test of safety given in the context. “If ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law,” (the condemning law). But assuredly he, who is “led” by the Spirit, will be longing after the perfection he has not reached, and feels it a congenial employ to mourn over his short-comings—and to confess and bewail them with ingenuous sorrow. And God is near to the contrite. A broken spirit is a pleasing sacrifice. (See the experience of Ephraim, Jer. xxxi. 18.)

3. In connection with this, and as a consequence of it, practical reformation, and holy, watchful living, is a remedy in the case supposed. “As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them.” “To him, says the Saviour, will I manifest myself, who loveth me and keepeth my commandments.” Gal. vi. 16; Jno. xiv. 21.

4. Are we to forget prayer as having so sure a bearing on the Christian’s calm of mind, and contentment of Spirit? “Be careful for nothing, (says Paul), but by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your

Hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Phil. iv.

To conclude—shall we not commend this grace to all who are yet strangers to it? Surely, to have peace of conscience, and calm content in God, is a thing desirable to every one. Without it what are all the good things of this world? As vinegar upon nitre, so is he that singeth songs to a heavy heart.

Surely, oh sinner, you have sometimes felt the terror of God. Would you not wish to look up to God with composure, and to look forward into eternity without dread? In vain will you seek this otherwise than by believing in the Saviour.—Say, does not conscience tell you that a better righteousness than your own is necessary to constitute your plea with the Almighty? Say, while leaning on any other foundation, if the suspicions of your mind do not sometimes betray its insufficiency? Your own imperfect obedience will not suffice for your reconciliation to the Judge of all: "as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse."—This is God's own saying designed to lead us, to drive us, from refuges of lies. Trust not, then, to the general uncovenanted mercy of God. It is the God of mercy who speaks thus. Beware of that peace, which is found in easy views of the requirements or obligations of the divine law, and not on the righteousness of the Redeemer, who magnified the law and fulfilled it for such as you,—that peace might be established on righteousness. And remember it is written there is no peace, saith my God—to the wicked! That is to the wicked continuing in his wickedness. But blessed be his name, peace there is, and peace is proclaimed to him that is far off, as well as to him that is nigh. 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. Amen.

LIE QUIET IN GOD'S HAND.

I know how ready the heart of a believer is to faint, and how busy Satan is in suggesting doubts and questionings, when the body of a Christian is weak. I have seen something of the depression and melancholy which sometimes comes upon the children of God, when they are suddenly laid aside by disease, and obliged to sit still. I have marked how prone some good people are to torment themselves with morbid thoughts at such seasons, and to say in their hearts, "God has forsaken me; I am cast out of His sight."

I earnestly entreat all sick believers to remember that they may honour God as much by patient suffering as they can by active work. It often shows more grace to sit still, than it does to go to and fro and perform great exploits. I entreat them to remember that Christ cares for them as much when they are sick as he does when they are well, and that the very chastisement they feel so acutely is sent in love not in anger. Above all, I entreat them to recollect the sympathy of Jesus for all His weak members. They are always tenderly cared for by Him, but never so much as in their time of need. He knows the heart of a sick man. He used to see "all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease" when upon earth. He felt specially for the sick in the days of His flesh. He feels for them specially still. Sickness and suffering, I often think, make believers more like their Lord in experience, than health. "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." (Isa. liii. 3; Matt. viii. 17.) The Lord Jesus was a "Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." None have such an opportunity of learning the mind of a suffering Saviour, as suffering disciples.—*J. C. Ryle.*

I am of the opinion that the Bible contains more true sensibility, more exquisite beauty, more pure morality, more important history, and finer strains of poetry and eloquence, than can be collected from all other books, in whatever age or language they may be written.—*Sir. Walter Jones.*

"THE OILED FEATHER."

(CONCLUDED.)

CHAPTER III.

When "Polished Sam" left home on this eventful morning, he had a smile on his lip, and a bright gladsome look in his eye; and if he had the world before him, he had a bright and happy home behind him.

Believe me, good reader, that a bright and happy home is a wonderful back-up to a man when he goes forth into a hard and cold world, to make his way through the day's business as best he can. On the present occasion, "Polished Sam" was backed up by Jenny, his wife; and by little Tommy, his son; and by Polly, the servant maid; they had all smiled him forth on his journey, and they would all smile him home again; aye, and Sam would be in a hurry to get home to all these smiling folk; and when he got a rub in the market from any of the Rusty Joes who might be there, he went famously through it all, for he knew he'd soon get home to peace, and quiet, and love again. You must not think, kind reader, that Sam Parsons didn't get knocks and rubs of all kinds in the world; he came in for his share; but he slipped through them better than other folk, for he was so civil and polished in his way, that he disarmed the ill-feeling of many.

The first person Sam Parsons came in sight of was old Biddy Magrath, the woman who sold apples at the corner of the street. "Good morning, Biddy," said Sam.

"Good morning, and good luck," answered Biddy; "Is it to market ye's going to-day, Mr. Parsons?"

"Yes, Biddy, can I do anything for you?" said Sam.

"Can ye do anything for me," answered Biddy, "to be sure ye can; bring me two ounces of the best tay, and half a pound of brown sugar, and here's the money;" and so saying, Biddy pulled forth a ball of rag from her pocket, which when unrolled much after the fashion of an Egyptian mummy, developed a shilling.

"I'll get you a good cup," said Sam, as he took the shilling, "you'll never have a better cup than I wish you;" and so

saying he smacked his whip, and passed, Bridget Magrath had not much of the sunshine of the world falling upon her poor wrinkled face; and it was well for she had naturally a cheerful temper; she led but a sorry life of it with the boys of the village, and Sam Parson's kind word was one of the few gleams which fell to her lot. We can understand, therefore, the multitude of blessings, wherewith Bridget overwhelmed Sam: how she called him all sorts of fine names, and at length how she subsided behind her rickety table to sell apples, if she could, all day long, but at any rate, to wait for the evening, and Sam's arrival with the "tay."

No doubt it was but a small kindness that Sam shewed, but he made a fellow creature happy by it; in fact he oiled old Biddy, as well as his wife, and child, and maid; and Bridget was not half so cross all that day, because she had the remembrance of a kindly word and genial smile to help her through.

As Sam Parsons went to-market he had to surmount the same hill on which his neighbour "Rusty Joe" afterwards fared so badly: the road was just as steep, his horses' load was just as heavy, and nothing but a little oil carried Sam successfully up the hill. The wheels of Sam's waggon turned easily enough, for he had not neglected to grease them; but all the grease in the world could not make the wheels turn by themselves; it is true Sam had a little oil with him; he generally had a little bottle amongst a few odds and ends in a box attached to his waggon, but one cannot oil horse's hoofs or joints: so on the present occasion, unless Sam Parson's were possessed of something more, he had little chance of surmounting Blackford hill; indeed less chance than his neighbour "Rusty Joe" had after him, for his horses were not so strong. But Sam Parsons had another oil bottle, which was able effectually to do the work; Sam had a kind heart and word for man and beast, and this kind word carried him up the Blackford hill; yes he oiled his horses with it, and up they went. When first the team desired to stop, Sam let the poor beasts rest to recover breath; he put a couple of stones behind the waggon wheels, and when he went round and patted each of the horses on the neck; yes he, he even rubbed

ther noses with his hand, and the horses seemed to understand that their master was carressing and encouraging them. If human beings rub noses in some parts of the world, and understand that form of salutation, why should not man and beast understand each other, when the former rubs the latter's nose? Well! Sam Parsons rubbed his horses' noses, and patted their necks, and thus the cunning fellow oiled them well; and when in a moment or two afterwards he smacked his whip, just as a matter of course, and cried jee-hup, and made other little persuasive noises, which we cannot write down, for horses language is a thing by itself; the team gave a pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether, and up the Blackford hill they went; and not one of them required the lash.

Now if Sam Parsons had told any one that he oiled his horses at the Blackford hill, they would in all probability have thought him mad; nevertheless, dear reader, he did really oil them as much as he did the wheels of the waggon they drew; he oiled their tempers, and moreover the oil put on them cost him nothing, and so the work was done. It is astonishing over what a surface a little oil will spread itself; astonishing how many obstacles it will remove; astonishing how many evils it will avert; what a pity it is that folk don't know more of its value—kind words! kind deeds! kind looks! oh! they will often carry us up a hill of difficulty, where the lash, and oath, and angry temper would prove of no avail.

The whole space of this story would be absorbed if we recount all Sam Parson's ins and outs at the market town even this one day. Were we to undertake such a task, we should have to tell how "Polished Sam," was served with a specially nice bit at the market inn; for the waiter always had a kind word, and an "if you please," and a "thank you" from him, when he had little more than gruff orders from most of the other farmers; we should also have to relate how a dealer who thought that Sam was very soft, because he was very civil, tried to "do" him in a bargain, but how our hero stood firm, for he was no fool; and he did not want to be done; and he got his fair price at last. We should also have to tell how Sam brought home a

paper of sugar candy from the grocer at whose shop he bought old Bridget's tea; and how about a dozen folk, who were snarling and quarreling with each other, all had a smile for him. Furthermore, we should have to tell how our hero, by a few kind words, threw oil on the troubled waters, when two ill-conditioned fellows were almost coming to blows; and how he put matters straight between them in two minutes, after they had been wrangling nearly two hours; but why say good reader, how much we *could* tell you, when we don't mean to do anything of the kind, and when it is high time for "Polished Sam" to be thinking of going home.

CHAPTER IV.

"Rusty Joe" made a bad day's business of it; he never got to market at all. A little examination of the harness showed that it was completely done for; and he had to untackle his horses; leave his waggon there; and make the best of his way home. With one delay and another, it was coming on evening before this unfortunate man could fetch his waggon home again. "Rusty Joe" tried one person and another in the village who had harness; he sent to some of brother farmers round about, but no one seemed inclined to go out of his way to oblige him; they had all at some time met with rudeness at his hands and now they did not want to have anything to do with him. Of course we are not commending their conduct; they ought to have returned good for evil but as is often the case, they did not.

So much time was consumed in sending about to the neighbours, and in endeavouring to cobble up a harness of rope, that it was coming on evening, before "Rusty Joe" was able to return with his horses and waggon; and when he reached it he was destined to meet with a fresh trouble—the waggon was not as he had left it; the covering had evidently been moved; and poor Joe found only too soon, the reason why; for no small part of the contents of the waggon had been stolen; a gipsy party had passed that way, and they had made free with the unguarded property.

When "Rusty Joe" found that he had not only lost his market, but also some of the produce that he was carrying there; and when he reflected that it was upon the sale

of that very produce he was in part depending to pay his rent he became as savage as an old bear, he cursed and swore; but that, like all cursing and swearing, did no good; and at last he sat down by the road side. "Rusty Joe" had not been there many minutes when he heard the sound of wheels; and soon "Polished Sam" appeared in sight, with his team; Sam was whistling like a blackbird, and the bells on his horses were tinkling cheerily; and he and the team seemed more like a merry family party than anything else. A moment's glance was sufficient to shew Sam Parsons that there was something wrong, and he hastened as fast as he safely could, down the hill, to meet his unhappy neighbour; to sympathize and help. But "Rusty Joe" wanted no help; no, not he; some folk were unlucky; and he didn't want other folk to be prying into and meddling with his affairs; and the ungracious man carried on in this style for full a half an hour.—As Joe would not be helped, of course Sam could not interfere; but he found various excuses for dawdling about, until his neighbour had managed to get the horses harnessed and put to; then with a muttered curse or two, the man and his horses started for home. But oh! what a chorus of creaks came from his dry and squeaking wheels; and so stiffly and heavily did the waggon roll, that there is no knowing when it would have reached home, or whether it would not have broken down again by the way, had not Sam Parsons ventured to offer a little help once more. Sam, in the kindness of his heart had kept close to his neighbour; and now he made bold to suggest that the waggon could never be got home without a little grease; "You hear it creaking, neighbour," said he to "Rusty Joe," "and I believe it was just for the want of a little grease, it stuck so fast upon the hill;" so saying, Sam Parsons produced a little from his waggon, and managed to get it well on to the creaking wheels. Marvellous was the change; the creaks suddenly subsided into silence, and the horses easily drew their load; even the patched up harness was quite equal to its work, so slight was the strain put upon it.

With all his grumpy tempers, "Rusty Joe" was not sorry to receive such sub-

stantial help; so he allowed Sam Parsons to walk by his side, Sam's waggon following close behind. Sam was not long before he spied Joe halting very much on one foot—Sam sympathized with him for having corns, and had just begun a dissertation on the virtues of a certain corn plaster; when his companion told him that it was stiff shoe leather that was doing the mischief; "the boots are as stiff as if they were frozen." said "Rusty Joe," "ever since the last market day, when they got a wetting." "Whee-o-o," whistled Sam, "I'll soften them in two minutes," and slipping behind to his waggon, he brought forth his oil bottle, and gave the boots a good anointing with its contents. Of course the cure could not be perfect in so short a time, still "Rusty Joe" could not but see that a little oil was able to do wonders; the boots seemed to have become quite good natured; and it was a question whether a little more oil would not make them even frolicsome; "I have great faith in oil," said Sam Parsons, "I oil almost everything; this very morning I oiled the lock of my street door and my penknife, and I greased my waggon wheels, and I oiled my wife, and child, and I gave the servant-maid a touch too; and I tell you what it is, neighbour Joe, I slip along famously, where I find many another stick fast." "Rusty Joe's" torn nail seemed to give him a fresh twinge when the penknife was spoken about, and as to the wife his conscience reminded him how bearishly he had behaved to her at breakfast.—"What do you mean by oiling your wife, man," said Rusty Joe, rather tartly; "you hav'nt been sneaky have you, and knocking under to a woman?" and "Rusty Joe" edged away from "Polished Sam's" sides, as though he were near some slimy serpent. "No indeed," answered Sam. "I've not been knocking any way, neither over nor under, but I just gave her and the bantling a loving word, before I started from home; and I said a kind word to the lass to cheer her up through her work for the day; and for the matter of that I gave the old apple woman a touch of my oiled feather too: few people say a kind word to her, and so I did, and I dare say, it helped her through the day too!" "I wouldn't cringe to any one living," continued "Polished Sam," "not to the Queen herself, but to, cringe

is one thing, to be civil, respectful, and loving, according as the case requires, is another; I never new ill come of it, and I've often known good. Yes, neighbour, I've known the good of it in my own house, over and over again—there's my Jenny, you don't know the work there's in that little creature; bless you! she'd work herself to the finger bone if you give her a kind word; I knowed her to sit up seven nights with me, without taking off a stitch of her clothes, that time I broke my leg; and when I said to her one morning, as the day was breaking, and I looked at her red eyelids, 'Jenny, my darling, I can never pay you for all this'—didnt she laugh and say, 'why Sam how can you tell such a story, you've paid me now?'

"Paid you, woman, why what do you mean?"

"Didnt you say my darling?"

"To be sure I did," said Sam.

"Well! wasn't that payment to a woman's heart?"

"And she looked so earnest like at me, that I felt the tears come into my eyes;—Oh neighbour I couldnt say it as she said it; for these women have a way of speaking that don't belong to us men; sometimes I think there's something that makes music in their throats; but ever since that day, I've been ten times as loving as I was before, and I try to say a kind word, not only to Jenny, but to every one I meet.—I believe neighbour," continued Sam, "that women's of that nature, that they'll do anything for love—no use our driving them, our scolding, and ordering, and banging about; that only makes slaves of them; but give them a little love, and they'll do wonders." As Sam Parsons found that his neighbour was listening, he was encouraged to go on, even though he received no answer. "And I do the same," said Sam, "by every wench that comes to service to me; servants are made of the same stuff as their mistresses; they all have hearts, and the same kind of oil will reach them all."

Thus discoursing, Sam Parsons reached his own farm yard; there was Jenny his wife ready to meet him with a kiss, and there was Tommy, who received his father with a click click, leaving it a matter of speculation as to whether he had not been offshaking ever since the morning until now;

and then there was Polly the servant maid standing close to the irons which shone, as though they were fresh from the shop; she hoped they'd catch her master's eye, and she knew she'd get a kind word; and when Sam went into the sitting room, there he saw a great heap of his stockings that Jenny had been darning, and when Sam sat down to tea, there was a pie that Jenny had made; and if Sam had been a little boy, instead of a grown up man, he would certainly have patted his chest and smacked his lips, and so expressed his opinion, that that was something like a pie." One would think that Sam Parsons had oiled the pie, so smoothly did each piece slip down his throat, for he was at peace with Jenny his wife, and Tommy his son, and Polly the servant maid. Good humour promotes digestion, and our readers will be glad to hear that Sam slept well upon that good supper, and had pleasant dreams, and woke up refreshed, to be happy and make others happy all day long.

Our friend "Rusty Joe" shall have the last chapter all to himself. And first of all it must be told that "Polished Sam's" observations were not altogether thrown away upon him. Although he wouldnt let on to other folk that he was a miserable man; still he really was so, and he owned it to himself; his conscience kept saying to him "you're all of a piece, 'force, force,' 'must, must,' 'shall, shall,' for everybody and everything." The contrast between his happy neighbour and his miserable self could not but strike the poor man's mind, and he made a desperate resolution to reform. "I'll do it, I'll do it," said Joe in a loud voice; never thinking that there was any one to hear him; but it so happened that the parson was close behind; and struck with his parishioner's energy, he said, "Do what?" "Reform," answered Joe, like a man in a dream, who feels himself obliged to speak whether helike or not.

"We can't reform in anything without the grace of God to help us," said the minister, "and we must ask for that, Mr. Irons."

This speech seemed to rouse Joe up, and he felt very queer when he found himself actually embarked in a conversation with the parson—all this was so very new, that Joe didnt quite like it, and indeed he would have backed out of the conversation as quickly as possible, but that the parson

always stuck like a piece of wax to his work, was too glad to get a word with his rusty parishioner, easily to let him go. Gently and gradually he drew from the poor crest-fallen fellow the whole of what was in his mind, and when Joe came to his house, he even asked the parson in.

The minister felt like a fish out of water in Joe Irons' house; but it was very well that he went in; for Joe's wife, irritated by the destruction of her solitary ornament, and by her husband's rude way of speaking, had not done his shirt, nor paid any very special attention to what he was to eat. The minister's presence prevented any harsh words; and his wise and loving counsel led Joe and his wife to forgive and forget the past and commence afresh that night, by asking for strength from heaven to speak, do, and be like Jesus Christ.—He read for them that night the 133rd Psalm, and shewed them "how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity; how it is the precious ointment upon the head that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirts of his garment, as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended on the mountains of Zion, for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore."

That very night Joe began. When the minister was going he actually handed him his hat, and made a kind of attempt at a bow at the door; and Joe's wife began, for she bathed his poor broken nail, and sat up nearly all night to get ready his shirt and when the morning came, "Rusty Joe" and when the morning came, "Rusty Joe" and in a twelve month's time, he was liked as well as any one in the parish. Yes! there was no more banging of doors in Joe Irons' house; there were no more rough words between him and his wife; there was enough of kindness to make home comfortable, and a little to spare to make neighbours agreeable, and Joe Irons became a happy man. Joe's choicest friend was henceforth "Polished Sam" and Joe kept as close to his skirts as though he expected to rub some of the polish from him upon himself. Joe never forgot the parson's advice to seek strength for improvement on his knees; and by way of a reminder, that he should not forget his new principles, he hung something over his bed-

room mantle piece, so that it should be the first thing that met his eyes when he awoke; and what do you think it was, good reader!

AN OILED FEATHER.

PERSONAL DEALING.

Are you saved yourself? then begin to seek the salvation of others. Do not give way to the false and fatal delicacy that keeps Christian fathers and mothers from warning and entreating their sons and daughters to decide for Christ without delay—that restrains the friend or neighbour from dealing faithfully with his dearest companion and old schoolfellow, or his kindly neighbour—the Christian on a journey, from giving the little leaflet, or speaking the quiet word in season, to a fellow-traveller, whom he shall never see again on this side the judgment throne.—Have you got the fervour of *first love*? That *always* opens the mouth and makes bold for Christ, and very tender is its pity for the lost. If it is yours, *use it*, while not abusing it, and prudent yet bold, in strong faith speak—or *write the pleading letter* when you cannot talk—to that loved yet still lost and leprous one. Aye, and even if you are repelled, return a kiss for the blow, and let your motto be, "Strike, but hear me!" And do not say, thou who art very feeble and unworthy in thine own eyes, humble in thine earthly station or an "obscure disciple," What can I do? Didst thou never hear what James Therra, an old carpenter on Salisbury Plain, said to a young Christian, who complained that she was unworthy to serve her Lord? "I used to think as you do, but the Lord taught me otherwise by a crooked stick. One day my son went to a sale of timber, and in the lot he bought was a piece so twisted and bent that I said sharply, 'It will be of no use.' Wait a bit; don't fret; let us keep a look out; there is a place somewhere for it. And soon after I was building a house; there was a corner to turn in it; not a stick in the yard would fit. I thought of the crooked one, and fetched it. *It seemed as if the tree had grown aside for the purpose.* Then, said I, 'There's a place for the crooked stick after all! Then there's a place for poor James Therra. Dear Lord! show him.

the place into which he may fit in the building of thy heavenly temple.' That very day, I learned that, poor and unlettered as I was, there was a work for me. And so there is a work for *you* to do, and nobody else can do it."

But, what if this page meets the eye, as I fear it will and must, of many a one whose knowledge of the truth is clear yet cold, who is *orthodox*—that is, *right in his thinking* and firm in the rejection of the multiform heresies of the times, but who is yet *personally* Christless. You believe in a divine Redeemer, but you have not the faith that prompts that adoring cry which is the "creed" of the heart:—"My Lord and my God!" You accept, nay, you contend for, as a cardinal, a fundamental truth, the doctrine of a true sacrifice offered on Calvary once for all.—But *you* have not trusted in that atonement, and therefore, because thy sins all unforgiven, at any moment thy breath may be stopped, and thy soul may go down to perdition. You "believe in the Holy Ghost," the Author of the new and second birth, but thy prayerlessness, thy worldliness, thy lack of spirituality, thy want of love to God and to his Word, to his house, to his day, to his ways, to his people; or thy pride, thine unforgiving spirit, thy covetous close-handedness that robs God and starves his poor; thy bondage it may be to some master, secret lust—all prove that "the Lord and Giver of life" has *not* quickened thee. Oh! lay to heart thy fearful estate. When this paper meets thine eye, thou, with multitudes more, mayest have had thy thoughts summoned, by special services and seasons, to THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST. But what will this avail, if the stone of sin still blocks up thy soul's sepulchre, and if here has been no Easter morn for thee?

"What profits it that Christ hath loosed and broke
All bonds, if ye in league remain
With earth? Who weareth Satan's yoke
Shall call him 'Master' but in vain.
Count ye THAT soul is reconciled—
A slave to earth, by sin defiled?

What profits it that Christ hath risen,
If dead in sins thou yet dost lie?
If still thou cleavest to thy prison,
What profit that he dwells on high?
His TRIUMPH will avail thee nought,
IF THOU HAST NE'ER THE BATTLE FOUGHT."

J. W.

TWO SERMONS A WEEK.

A correspondent of the *Independent*, an aged minister, thus refers to this subject:—"The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed. Brethren, I have looked on for half a century and more, and over almost half a continent, and my heart aches to see how much time is spent in finishing and polishing and ornamenting the sword of the Spirit—frequently with the scabbard on—when the naked blade aimed at the heart—if not with all the artistic skill of fence—would bring down twenty subjects to one. For I now say, with the sincerity and solemnity due to the subject, that in the course of my experience it was not the labored, compact, well-reasoned discourses that produced the best effect, the most conversions, or the holiest Christians; but the earnest, sincere, simple preaching—if not so correct rhetorically—of a soul on fire. Now, if I had the ear of that young brother, and might speak with the affectionate earnestness of one who may not improperly be called a father in the ministry, but who looks *back* upon the three-score years and ten, I would solemnly charge him, as he values his health, as he values his life, as he values his usefulness, as he values the salvation of souls, and approbation of his Lord, never to attempt to write two sermons a week for his ordinary congregation. Sometimes, but rarely, he may meet with occasions that will justify the extra labor; but at home he will do more good, and have a richer harvest of souls, although he may gain less reputation, by coming at least once a Sabbath before his people with a well-thought, but less laboured (in style) address to the conscience and the heart. May the Lord of the vineyard teach his laborers how to work for him.

EGYPT.

'TEMPERANCE,'—Says Dr. Franklin, "puts wood on the fire, flour in the barrel, meal in the chest, money in the purse, credit in the country, contentment in the house, clothes on the children, vigor in the body, intelligence in the brain, and spirit in the whole constitution."

THE TRAMP OF TIME.

We hear a great deal about the flight of time, the swift feet of time, the wings of time, but did any one ever hear the tramp of time?

It was about a year ago, that, with three friends, I started, late one evening, for a clock factory, in the manufacturing village where I was stopping for a few days. It was a large establishment, and, for the novelty of visiting such a place in the night, I had accepted the watchman's invitation to come and make the tour with him. We saw the faint glimmer of his lantern as we drew near, and almost a feeling of awe crept over us as we stood in the shadow of the immense pile, waiting for admittance.

We passed in through the lower rooms past the ponderous engine, past the huge vats, from which blocks of birch and walnut sent up a fragrant steam. Up the broad stairs, flight after flight, through long rooms, by daylight peopled with busy workmen, but now silent as death; on through the long wings—up, and down, and up again. Here, the light of our lanterns glimmered from piles of newly-gilded pillars, and there we saw it reflected, half a room's length before us, from long rows of glasses. Here were lines of lettered dial-plates; there were shelves of empty cases. Beyond were the finished clocks, standing in solid phalanx, ready to begin their monotonous tune. At last, without saying a word, the watchman led us to a room, where, on long benches, lay the machinery of hundreds of clocks—the vitals, the hearts of the clocks. It was the place where the movements of the main-spring were adjusted; and every one of the hundreds was ticking! beating! throbbing! Involuntarily, we stopped and listened. The effect cannot be described with words. It was the relentless measuring out of our lives, drop by drop, from the bucket of time; it was the audible pulsing of the life-tide through the night of our being (ah, for the morning!); it was the steady tramp! tramp! tramp! of the invisible sentinels who walk up and down the shore of the eternal sea, waiting for the dawn of that morning when time shall be no longer.

The sound has left a memory with me that never, while I live, will be effaced. I felt that night what we seldom realize in our ordinary walks, that time goes outward from us, but never returns.

The day will come when we shall understand our folly in the misimprovement of time. But the days of miracles are past, and the shadow on the dial shall never turn back at our cry. Let us so "watch," that when the tramp of time dies to our mortal ears we may be ready for the new day!—*American Paper.*

GOD'S WISDOM IN CREATION.

The same Being who made man, formed, it is evident, the animals which minister to his comfort. Animal life, again, is dependent on vegetable life, and vegetable life is dependent on the soil and atmosphere; and thus the wide earth is seen to be one great whole. But terrestrial objects are also dependent on the seasons, and the seasons are produced by the relation between the earth and the sun; and the great whole is enlarged so as to include the sun. The strength of the animal muscles is suited to the size of the earth; and the continued existence of the plants of the earth, and of animal life, is dependent on the length of the day and of the year, and these are occasioned by the laws and adjustments of the solar system. The solar system, again, is manifestly connected in the government of God with other systems; for it appears that our sun is advancing nearer to certain stars, and moving away from others, and that in obedience to laws which regulate other suns and systems of suns. This line of argument stretches out to the most distant parts of the known universe. He who made the muscle of my limb made the earth on which I walk, and the great luminary round which the earth walks, and the grand galaxy in which the sun moves. He who made my eye made the light which comes to it; and he who made the light made the sun which sheds that light, and the distant star, which has taken thousands of years to send its beams across the immeasurable space that intervenes.—*Mc Cosh.*

THE MEMORY OF A MOTHER.

When temptation appears, and we are almost persuaded to do wrong, how often a mother's word of warning will call to mind vows that are rarely broken. Yes, the memory of a mother has saved many a poor wretch from going astray. Tall grass may be growing over the hallowed spot where all her earthly remains repose; the dying leaves of autumn may be whirled over it, or the white mantle of winter may cover it from sight; yet the spirit of her when he walks in the right path, appears, and gently, softly, mournfully calls to him when wandering off into the ways of error.

THE GOOD NEWS.

MAY, 15th, 1863.

R A I N.

While we write, the first shower of spring rain descends. It has been long looked for, anxiously desired by thousands and prayed for by many, and now it comes, gently distilling, to the gratification of the vegetable and animal kingdom. The ever-greens already look greener. The grass is almost visibly shooting, and the heart of man rejoiceth.

This shower is of incalculable value. It is worth millions of dollars. For want of sufficient rain this time last year, the hay crop was said to be deficient, and as the result, fodder was during the winter both scarce and costly. A similar experience was dreaded for the present year, and men who endured for the present year, and men who endured distress in the past, looked on the continued drought with sad apprehension for the future.

The present shower may be the earnest of still more valuable showers. If such be needed, our Christian readers should make their opinions and desires known at a throne of grace. There is too little attention paid to this duty. The God who can give and withhold rain is the hearer of prayer, and ought to be solicited.—When he gives rain, whether it appears to us to be in season or not, he ought to be cheerfully thanked for his goodness, and when he chooses to withhold it, we ought not to speak and act as if God had forgotten to be gracious, or had forgotten his promise of giving seed time and harvest as long as the earth remaineth.

CONVERSION IN PRIMITIVE AND IN MODERN TIMES.

BY JOHN CAIRD, D. D.

Has the gospel lost its ancient power?—
Has the regenerating influence of the truth

died away with the lapse of years? The same in form, though it be, as in the primitive times are we now fallen upon evil days, in which the body alone remains, while the spirit and life are gone? The old rod is here, once wielded by the magician's hand. Has it lost its power to conjure? The ancient sword of the Spirit which in the great days of old wrought mighty work against the hosts of evil, still hangs in the Church's armory, but we cannot now tell of thousands and tens of thousands as the trophies of his power on a single field. Shall we conclude that its edge is blunted or that the puny hands of modern men are too weak to wield it? We never witness now, or only at rare intervals, and with doubtful resemblance, any reproduction of the scenes of Pentecost. We never read in the transaction of modern churches any authentic narratives such as as those with which the records of the Church's early history abounds,—of thousands converted by a single sermon; of the simultaneous movement of souls stirred and swept together as multitudinous waves of the sea by the same wind of heaven; of whole communities and nations born in a day. Of old, a simple unlettered man, destitute of intellectual culture or rhetorical art, would pass from country to country, and wherever he went, in hamlet and town and city, the hearts of the men were strangely moved by his words. In our day the ablest and most cultivated minds, after long and laborious training, armed with all the influence which learning, eloquence, dialectic skill, can lend to human lips, will fail throughout the course of a long ministry to elicit any such marked authentication of their teaching. What then? Shall we conclude that the force of the truth has become spent, that the living, quickening power of the gospel has fled? Is Christianity an agent that loses, like a spring, its elasticity by use; a specific whose virtue evaporates by long exposure; a voice from heaven once pealing in thunder tones on a startled world, but whose echoes are falling now faint and ever fainter on the ear? Or if not, why are its effects so different? If the agent be unaltered, why are the phenomena by which its presence was manifested in other days seldom or never paralleled in our own? H—

than hearts are the same. Human needs are the same. Still souls are perishing and need to be saved. Still souls are slumbering, and need to be roused ere they sleep the sleep that knows no waking. What then is different?—What is wanting? Why can we only tell, as the highest result of ministerial effort, of cold formalities observed, and decorous proprieties maintained; at best, of one soul here, and another there, at wide intervals, owning the power of the truth.

Now, whilst the answer to such inquiries would undoubtedly involve much that is to the dishonour of the Church in modern times yet the difference in question admits to some extent of a less unfavorable explanation.—Whilst the diminished power of the truth must, in part at least, be ascribed to the colder spiritual atmosphere in which it acts—to the weaker faith and more languid energy of its preachers—to the greater secularity and indifference of its hearers; yet on the other hand, it is not invariably to be concluded that the influence of the gospel is really less, simply because it is less palpable. The results of preaching may not be less important, though from the altered circumstances of the Church and of society, they are of necessity, less striking and demonstrative. How far it is so, it will not be uninteresting or unprofitable to inquire. For, knowing how much of the admitted difference of results is to be set down to the altered condition of the problem, we shall be able to form a just estimate of what is to be ascribed to less venial causes. If it can be shown that the apparent number and the marked and striking character of conversions cannot, from the nature of the case, be the same now as in another and different age, then we shall, to some extent at least, be saved from disappointment at the comparatively slight apparent results of Christian effort. We shall know what we have to look for, and we shall be taught to avoid the distortion of aim, misdirection of effort which is implied in the craving for countable results. We shall cease to measure the success of the preaching of the gospel by external excitements and palpable conversions; and we shall no longer be oppressed with a sense of failure because we do not witness in

our day any literal reproduction of the incidents of an earlier age. To these ends, therefore, it will be useful to indicate one or two points of difference which must necessarily obtain betwixt conversions to Christianity in modern, and conversions to Christianity in apostolic times.

One most obvious point of difference is, that *then* conversion consisted in the *adopting of a new religion*, whilst *now* it consists, generally, in the *realizing of an old and familiar one*. Formerly, in other words it was a new faith espoused, now it is only an old one quickened.

There may be, in reality, fewer conversions now than in the Church's earlier and brighter days; but few or many, they are of necessity, in the great majority of cases, less palpable and appreciable. For when men became Christians *then*, they had openly to renounce one religion and adopt another—to pass at one step from Paganism or Judaism to Christianity; when men become Christians *now*, in most cases they simply pass from nominal to real Christianity. There is no external act of renunciation, no visible recanting an old, and professing of a new creed; all the difference is, that what was before a mere form becomes a reality, that old creeds are realised, old forms become instinct with the sap of reviving spiritual life. But it is plain that this last sort of conversion, though equally real and important, attracts much less notice than the former. Dig up a tree and transplant it from one soil to another, and every passer by will be aware of the process. But what observer can note the moment when through the blackened trunk and the dry and leafless branches of the tree that has stood bare and barren through many winter days, the first stirring of the new spring sap is taking place? Let a man desert from the enemy's service and enlist in yours, and all can perceive and appreciate such an accession to the ranks the moment it occurs; but though the gain in strength may be as great when a traitor who has long worn your country's uniform renounces his secret treachery; and becomes a loyal hearted seldier and subject of the Queen; this is a change which passes unobserved. So in the case before us—

When a heathen was converted to christianity, his whole life became revolutionized. It was a root-and-branch change, a transplantation to new ground, an open forswearing of the enemy's service and enlisting in the ranks of Christ. Unhallowed rites and ceremonies were no longer frequented; sacrifices and festivals ceased to be observed; habits of life were completely altered; idolatrous customs and usages, which interpenetrated domestic and social existence, were renounced; licentious excesses, formerly regarded as venial, if not committed under the very sanction of religion, were succeeded by a pure and strict morality; from a despiser or persecutor of Christianity, the neophyte became an open and devoted follower of the Lord Jesus and of course, a change so radical, so revolutionary, could not fail to be instantly observed by all to whom the convert was known. Every such conversion would count at once as an unmistakable accession to the Church's ranks. The power of the truth would receive in it a new authentication, and the Church could openly bless God for the salvation of another soul.

But, on the other hand conversion in our day is in general a very different process.—The same in essence, it is, in form, much less obtrusive. For it consists simply in a man's becoming a real and earnest believer in those truths of which he had already and perhaps, all through life, been a formal and nominal believer. The whole mechanism and organization were here before, now, for the first time, instinct with life. There was action and motion before, but they were the action and motion of an automaton; now they are the same outwardly, but a soul has crept into the anatomical machine.

For what, I pray you, does any unconverted man in a Christian Church need in order to make him a true Christian? Not, in most cases, new knowledge; now not a new creed or form of belief, but the making that creed a reality, which has hitherto been but a form. We do not require to teach him the facts and doctrines of Christianity, or to convince him of their truth. He believes in them all; he assents to them all. They are all in his memory, in his head; what is wanted now is

to get them into his heart. It is not more food the sick man wants, but the reviving of his appetite and digestive functions, that he may assimilate the food he has got. It is not more fuel the fire wants; pile coal on an expiring breathless fire, and you only put it out; but it wants kindling and draught to lay hold of and consume the fuel that is already there. So, in order to make a worldly man spiritual, a careless man a Christian, we do not need to ring the changes for ever on the old story, to repeat and reiterate, in order to inform his mind, the old news about death and judgment, sin and salvation, heaven and hell God's wrath and God's love in Christ Jesus. Are there not hundreds of irreligious, worldly men in every Christian community who are most thoroughly conversant with the facts and doctrines of Christianity; who need no long drawn proof to gain their assent to the historical truth of the gospel; who believe in the life, sacrifice, death, and resurrection of Christ, in the offered mercy and love of God through his dear Son, in the necessity of faith repentance, and a holy life? Question them and would not the answer be, "All this we steadfastly believe!" Yes; but what they do need is, that all this mass of torpid matter this lumber of unprofitable dogma, should be vitalized. The form of religion is there already, but there is no breath in it; what is wanted is to breathe a soul into these ribs of death. And so if some worshipper in a Christian congregation should this day become a sincere and earnest Christian,—if God should bless the preaching of the truth to his conversion,—in all probability the whole change would be, that he now in the secret depths of his spirit begins for the first time to *feel* and *realize* what hitherto he had theoretically believed. His mind would be roused to lay hold, with the appropriating of faith, grasp with the vitalizing energy of trust, that truth as it is in Jesus, which formerly it had but intellectually trifled with. This would be conversion. But for a time at least it would be an unnoticed and secret thing. The changed demeanour, the softened aspect, the trembling lip, the tearful eye, some secret friend might note, but for the world there would be little or no difference. The old organization, the

stem and branches of the winter tree are there all the same, and only God's eye perceives that the stirring sap of spring, betokening a glorious summer's fruit, has begun to rise within it. The follower of sin has become a soldier of Christ, but he wore the same guise and uniform before; and the Master's piercing gaze alone it is that can discern that the traitor-heart is gone, that a new heart and right spirit are there, and that the badge of the cross betokens one who has now the right to wear it.

HOW TO MAKE OUR PRAYER MEETING INTERESTING.

BY REV. JOHN TODD, D.D.

We will be serious now. We shall try to sympathize with the true and faithful—not a large number in any church—who are always at 'our' prayer meeting, and who wish they knew how to make it more interesting. You want to know how to bring live coals to the altar as you go to waken its fires. You want not merely to enjoy more, but you want others should, and you want this meeting to be an instrument of doing your church and the community good. How shall you aid it?

1. Let the weekly prayer meeting live in your heart—think of it when in your business—when you read your Bible—and see if you do not light upon a beautiful text to carry there—when you read the religious paper, and see if you do not find some thought, or some anecdote, or some fact, which you can use in the meeting. See if you can't gather a few drops of the dew which falls on Hermon.—You may not be a watch, or a telescope maker, but you can do something, if you will think of it beforehand. You can utter a thought in a few moments which cost you, perhaps, days to think out. A single thought that has been revolving in your mind, is valuable in proportion as it has been thought over. The pebble which David chose was one that had been washed and smoothed in the brook a long time. It was all the better for its polishing. On the day of your meeting, don't forget to think about it—mention it in family worship—let your family see that it lives in your heart. Be sure and pray for it before you go to it. Pray that the Holy Spirit may be present to warm, cheer, and animate every heart.

2. Feel responsibility for it. Make it a solemn duty, a habit, and a privilege to be there. Go with a cheerful face. You would do so, if going to a party. Don't go acting, looking, or feeling that you have a chain around you called Duty, by which you are

dragged to the place. If the room is dark, move round and get more lights. If not warm, go to your brethren, and insist on them that the room must be comfortable, pleasant and inviting. If others seem inclined to shirk, don't you. If the singing is tame, or dull, or not at all—be careful and see some one or more of the brethren who is a singer, and urge him to be there. If you can't sing he must go. If you can, you need his aid. Go up near the pulpit or table—up, where your minister and brethren can see you, and feel that your breath is warm.

If the meeting is 'thrown open' to, and for anybody, don't sit and wait for others. Be ready. Have your gun loaded, and shoot quick. There is no electricity in silence or in waiting. Let your prayer be short. Just suppose it divided into three, and it will be long enough. I once heard and joyfully united in six prayers, no one of which was over two minutes long. They were intensely good.

3. Feel under obligation to have variety in your meeting. It is fatal to make a prayer meeting stereotyped, and there is no danger that is greater. Can't you sometimes have something new sung? Can't you get this or that different young man to come in and say a few words? Can't you get that other man who never speaks, to open his mouth? You go to them along before the meeting and speak encouragingly to them. Don't scare them by making them think they must make a great speech. Go to your meeting hopeful—I mean really believing Christ, when he promises to be in the midst of the two or three who gather in his name. You may feel, perhaps, that you are cold and others are cold. But there certainly will be one there—Christ—who is not cold. Don't always be harping on one string, either in your prayers or in your exhortations. Keep the wheels out of the old deep rut. Some are always dwelling upon a revival—a revival!—as if there was nothing done or to be prayed for but this; whereas there is the spirituality of the church, there is the word, the seed—sown; there is the Sabbath School—there is the liberality of the people of God, there is the soil preparing and to be prepared, for the seed of the word, and all these belong to the prayer meeting.

Don't scold. It will do no good. Those present know they don't deserve it, and the absent don't hear it. The prayer meeting is not the place to let off spiritual dyspepsia. Don't whip your pastor with your prayers.—His heart is heavy enough; but he knows it is his duty, to keep his heart-ache to himself, and to be outwardly cheerful, at least. He wants and needs your earnest prayers, but

don't take him up as you would a frosty iron, and drop him as you feel the frost.

Don't teach false theology. You sometimes hear men say, 'if now this church would only come down on her knees in the dust before God a revival would follow!' Don't you know that if she should thus come down, the revival is already there!

Don't carry a burdened conscience to the prayer meeting. If to day, or the last week, you have wronged any one in bargains, in words, or in any way, settle it with him and with God before you come to the meeting. You will find the meeting dead and cold to you if you do not. 'Our sins separate between us and thee.' Don't be afraid you will do more than your share to make 'our prayer meeting' interesting. 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do with thy might.' In building a church edifice—the mere shell to contain the church—there must be the architect, and also the contractor, and the carpenters, and also the men with spades, and men to carry the brick and mortar. They are all to do something. They are all needed. And so in our churches, every one can, and should do something. All cannot talk or pray in public; they began the spiritual life too late; but they can always be there. And even such, constant, meek, and good are helps to the meeting. Every one who goes helps all to feel that there is another heart to feel, to sympathize, and to thrill with all the rest. Go then constantly; and carry there faith, hope, charity, and love to Christ, and you will surely grow in the divine life, and will never complain that 'our prayer meeting' is not interesting.

BIBLE NOTE.

"For a small moment have I forsaken thee: but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer," (Isa. liv. 7, 8.)

The precious thought of this verse is "the exceeding riches of God's grace;" the contrast between his judgments and his kindnesses. The forsaking is "for a small moment," the gathering is "with great mercies." The hidden face is "but for a moment," and "in a little wrath;" the "mercy" is accompanied "with everlasting kindness."—Judgment is his strange work. Strong to smite, he is stronger still to save.

What an encouragement to every backslider to return! that he will be met, not with coldness—rebuke—reserve—distance; but with a forgiving welcome. That gospel picture of the father receiving the lost prodigal may be regarded as the representation of the Lord's thoughts embodied in acts. He gives the

kiss, the robe, the ring, the feast. There is not a frown on that Father's brow, all the erring past is buried in everlasting oblivion.

"This is not the manner of men, O Lord God!" Man's love, how easily cooled—easily diverted; like the ray of light, refracted and broken, or dimmed and obscured by the passing cloud. But "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." He knows no obliquity—he is without shadow of turning. It is in spiritual as in natural things. As we ourselves cast our own shadows, intercepting the beams of the sun; so, it is not God, but our own sin, which projects the shadow in the pathway of the spiritual life. Moreover, the forsaking on his part is only apparent. The sun shines brightly as ever behind these temporary intervening clouds. The stone or impeding rock obstructs the flow of the great river "for a moment." But it is only "for a moment;" and it rolls on deep and still as before, in its full volume of "everlasting kindness."

Be it mine, if the flow be arrested, to search out and remove the obstruction; if God's face be hidden, to discover the intervening clouds; if the spiritual life be languishing, to trace out the secret of the sorrowful declension; whether it be neglected privilege, or omitted duty, or secret sin, or tampered—with temptation, or engrossing worldliness. "I will say unto God my Rock, why hast thou forgotten me; why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?" Oh how little it takes to soil the windows of the soul, and to dim and blur the spiritual landscape! How small the worm needed to wither and blight the gourd of our spiritual joys! How little it takes to rust the key of prayer, clip the wings of faith, chill the warmth of love, and shut us out from the loving ear of God. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me."

As it is, "the Lord the Redeemer," who speaks in our motto-verse, to him I must look for grace and strength—restoration and revival. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. "Wilt thou not revive us, O Lord?" "So will not we go back from thee: quicken us, and we will call upon thy aame."—*J. A. Macduff, D.D.*

DO YOU LOVE JESUS ?

A few weeks since, that venerable man of God, Dr. Lyman Beecher, went to his rest. Some nine years ago, during a revival in one of our eastern churches, he was present, his form then bowed with age, his locks white as snow, and his voice tremulous as a child's.—I myself, then scarce more than a child, shall never forget his deep earnestness as he urged the young to come to Christ; but ~~was~~

remains ineffaceably engraved on my memory as a sweet memento of his life.

A large number had gathered in the pastor's study for religious conversation and special prayer. The Spirit of God was there. Passing through the room, speaking words of consolation or entreaty, Dr. Beecher paused by the side of a little girl, perhaps of ten summers. Bending over her, he said,—

"Do you love Jesus?"

"Yes, sir," said the child, confidently, not looking up, for her eyes were filled with tears.

He placed his hand on her head as if in blessing, saying in that tremulous voice, modulated by deep emotion within,—

"Well, you *may* love him just as much as you have a mind to."

Perhaps that child has forgotten those words, but I never can. Often, when a cold world has looked down frowningly, I have thought of this precious love.

Little ones, do you love Jesus? You love your playmates, but they will grow up and leave you; you love your brothers and sisters, but by and by the cares of life will seem to divide your affections; you love your father and mother, but soon they must die and be laid in the grave. Do you love *Jesus*? He loves you.

"His is love beyond a brother's,
Costly, free, and knows no end."

—*Tract Journal.*

THE CLOSET AND THE PULPIT.

It is said of Rev. Mr. Hammond, whose labors God so greatly blessed, that his closet and his pulpit never parted company. He was eminently a man of prayer, and did everything in the *spirit* of prayer. His communion with God was close and constant. He came from the closet strengthened for his work in the pulpit and in the city, and went back to his closet, not only for repose and refreshment, but to be strengthened and prepared for further labor. This made him "strong in the Lord and in the power of his might." And why are any of God's servants feeble in action, but because they are weak in devotion? We live in days when christians are far less in the closet than they should be. The study and the counting-house encroach upon the closet. We are reaching men and business men, but not so much as we should be, praying men.

"MINE'S A RELIGION FOR ALL WEATHERS."

There is a fishing village on the coast of Cornwall, where the people are very poor, but pious and intelligent. One year they were sorely tried. The winds were contrary, and for nearly a month they could not put to sea. At last, one Sabbath morning the wind changed, and some of the men whose faith was weak went out towards the beach, the women and children looking on sadly, many saying with sighs, "I'm sorry it's Sunday, but—" "If we were not so poor—"

"But, if," said a sturdy fisherman, starting up and speaking aloud; "surely, neighbours, you're not going with your bats and ifs to break God's law."

The people gathered around him and he added, "Mine's a religion for all weathers, fair wind and foul. This is the love of God, that ye keep his law." "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," that's the law, friends. And our Lord came not to break, but to fulfil the law. True, we are poor; what of that? Better poor, and have God's smile, than rich and have his frown. Go, you that dare; but I never knew any good come of a religion that changed with the wind."

These words in season stayed the purpose of the rest. They went home and made ready for the house of God, and spent the day in praise and prayer. In the evening, just when they would have been returning, a sudden storm sprung up, that raged terribly for two days. After the tempest came settled weather, and the pilchard fishery was so rich and abundant, that there was soon no complaining in the village. Here was a religion for all weathers. Remember the words, "Trust in the Lord and do good, and verily thou shalt be fed."

ETYMOLOGY OF HUSBAND.—The word *husband*, it seems is, a contraction from *house-band*. The head of a family is called husband from the fact that he is or ought to be the *band* which unites the house together—or the bond of union among the family. It is to be regretted that all husbands are not *house-bands* in reality as well as in name. There are a great many *misnomers* current in this world.

NIAGARA.

Oh! what a flood of waters! broad and deep,
 From distant lakes descending, till in one
 Great river, over shelving ledges rough,
 It leaps and rushes to the smooth green edge,
 The dreadful over rolling verge, and falls
 Mid spray and mist and thunder, on the rocks,
 And broken, roaring billows, far below!
 Oh! flood of falling waters! day and night,
 The early light of morning, and the heat
 Of burning noon, and shadows of the eye,
 Are passing over thee, in ceaseless course;
 And fad and leave thee as they come and go,
 Unaltered! still the same tremendous flood
 Of falling waters! Winter spreads his snows,
 Upon thy rocky banks, and spring her flowers,
 And summer colours fair, and autumn strews
 Her withered leaves; and still amid the gloom
 Of winter, and the cheerful light of spring,
 And heat of summer, and autumnal shades,
 Thou rollest down, the same tremendous flood
 Of falling waters!

From what well spring old,
 And deep, and wonderful, dost thou obtain
 This mighty fulness? How can any source
 Yield such supply unceasing? Every hour
 Yield such an ocean! and yet day by day,
 And month by month, and even year by year,
 Continue unexhausted? This I asked
 Upon a time, when from a rocky bank,
 Washed by the rapid waters, I beheld,
 The green and foaming flood, in strong career,
 Go'rolling to the abyss: and as I mused
 My thoughts did wander backward to the source
 Whence issued all these waters. There it lay,
 Stretched over half a continent; the hills
 Fir-clad, and sloping to its sandy shores;
 The mountains towering far along its edge:—
 The broad green valleys for a thousand miles,
 And caverns deep, and torrents from the rocks,
 And rainy clouds of heaven, without refrain,
 Emptying their gathered waters, into one
 Vast inland sea:—that sea its winding way
 Pursuing sometime stretched between its shores,
 Wide as an ocean, sometimes rolling on
 Through narrow channels, forming in its course
 A chain of lakes gigantic; till at last,
 The outlet gained, adown a rough decline,
 Of wave-worn rocks, on to the final edge,
 And over it, into the abysmal gulph.
 Mist-filled, and echoing with ceaseless roar
 Of sullen thunder, with tumultuous swell,
 Green depths and snow-white billows, gloriously
 Fall in a floodtide endless!

Musing thus
 Upon this wonder, which my list'ning ear
 Filled with o'erpowering music, and my eye
 With form of beauty and sublimity;

My thoughts were lifted from the watery face
 Of this great mirror, to the infinite
 And everlasting; whose reflections bright,
 I saw within its bosom—Yonder fall,
 Methought, sets forth the heavenly;—in all
 Its depth and grandeur, 'tis the image dim
 Of the outflow continuous, and descent
 Silent, but overwhelming, of all grace,
 All mercy, and all peace, all light and joy,
 All goodness and all blessing, from the fount
 Of Spiritual fulness—that sweet spring,
 High on the hill of God, which overflows
 With living waters—Him who richly yields,
 And freely gives to countless multitudes,
 More than the tongue can utter—and all this
 Continues to impart, long as the sands
 Are falling in the hour-glass of Time;
 And will continue to supply as long
 As ages roll their waves successive, o'er
 The shoreless ocean of Eternity!
 Nor only this;—for while yon fall reflects
 Dimly the everlasting; its wide source
 Mirrors the infinite: and thus unseals
 A mystery. This gives the answer true
 To the deep questions; How can healing grace,
 Flow without ceasing from the wounds of Christ?
 Why faileth not His love? Ten thousand times
 Rejected, why does He still turn on man
 Compassion's look? Why is His bleeding heart,
 Ne'er drained of sympathy? Ne'er drained of
 grace,
 To endure the sin that pierceth it afresh,
 And on the hands which lacerate it oft,
 To pour forgiveness? Why exhausteth not
 His treasury of blessings, though He gives
 Unceasingly, and why will giving ne'er
 Its fulness e'en diminish? To all this
 With silent eloquence, yon bright expanse
 Replies,—“These rapids and the sounding fall
 Unbroken, from my ocean depths proceed.
 Not I created these to yield; but these,
 Simply my overflows. From this learn
 The heavenly mystery.” In outline faint
 Thine image fair, O fountain infinite,
 Thus shines upon these waters! not the form
 Of source created is reflected here;
 But source of all creation! not the spring
 That may be fathomed, and by drain of years
 Exhausted, but the great profound of God!
 For Thou art God, O Christ! Unlimited
 In all Thine attributes by circling bounds
 Of time, degree, or space; but far above
 From infinite to infinite, Thou art,
 And from eternal to eternity!
 Here lies the secret well spring of the wealth
 Of blessing, which overflows this universe.
 Love without limit, wisdom vast as love,
 And power commensurate, these three in one
 The everlasting cause;—the grand effect,
 Creation; and Redemption of the lost!

Roll then, O thunder of Niagara!
 Flow down ye foaming billows! and ye depths
 Beyond, forever yield your azure tide!
 Ye tell me of my mercies, and of Him,
 Who is their giver,—speak the wondrous name
 Of Jesus,—in the mystery of whom,
 All fullness dwells!—Oh I am rich in Him!
 The blessings which my soul has yet received,
 Are but His overflowings; and the sea,
 That I shall drain in ages yet to come,
 Only His overflowings; and the sea,
 To this supply, is but the drop of dew,
 To the wide ocean! Want I cannot know,
 For present things are mine, and things to come;
 The world is mine; and life and even death
 Are mine; all things are mine; and I am His,—
 And He, the eternal heritage of God!

H. GRATTAN GUINNESS,

A DOCTRINE FROM A PROMISE.

There is music in the word "Come"
 —surely there is, when it reaches our ears
 in our sadness, and we have reason to be-
 lieve there is both sympathy and power in
 the quarter whence it comes. In our sin-
 ful, suffering world there is much to com-
 fort us in the familiar invitation of the
 Lord, "Come unto me, all ye that labor
 and are heavy laden, and I will give you
 rest."

But here is a doctrine enfolded in the
 promise. Let us see what it is. It was a
 human voice that uttered it. Was the
 speaker any more than human?

When he spoke, he stood upon soil that
 had been sprinkled with tears—how often
 with blood! Few spots upon earth can
 claim exemption from a similar history.—
 He stood in the midst of a race, and
 spoke to it, a race acquainted with grief.
 The various forms of suffering that were
 immediately beneath his eye, were only
 drops of an ocean that girdled the globe.
 The heavy laden were about him and
 there was not a realm of earth where they
 did not abound.

The mysterious speaker invites—"Come
 unto me all ye that are weary and heavy
 laden." All? Yes, all. For it was a
 fallen race he came to bless. And that
 word all had no limit but the race. He
 knew that the words he uttered would go
 upon the Sacred Record—would fly
 abroad by the printed page, and the
 living voice, even to every land. Men—
 suffering men—the poor—the bereaved—

the tempted—the persecuted—the unhap-
 py everywhere, would hear, or read, and
 would think—how could they help it—
 would think these words were used in kind-
 ness to them. And who dares deny that
 the speaker meant these words should go
 world-wide, and be words of cheer to all
 the sufferers they should reach of all the
 millions of the race?

So then all the sorrowing and suffering
 may come to Him. But how shall they
 come? Surely not into his bodily presence
 —for that was speedily withdrawn. Most
 obviously they were to come by the out-
 pouring of their wants and sorrows into
 his ear—by the communion of their hearts
 with him. They were to come and speak
 to him as an invisible friend.

I see a poor African in sadness—let him
 come. I see a weeping Greenlander—let
 him come. I see a Chinaman wading
 through sorrow—he may come. A Hin-
 doo—a Pacific Islander, one, any, all, yes
 let them come. All the heavy laden may
 come.

But comfort is at hand, it must be be-
 cause he that offers it is nigh. In what
 sense can the sufferers, in all the zones of
 the earth, come to him otherwise than by
 pouring out their sorrows and casting their
 care upon him, as upon an invisible friend?
 And if there be any vital energy and value
 in the promise, "I will give you rest," it
 must be because he, who offers the rest, is
 at hand to afford it.

If he is not present with sufferers, and
 present on every spot on earth where they
 are—if he is not present amid arctic snows
 and burning climes—if he is not present
 with every sorrowing one that hears his
 invitation, and strives to comply with it,
 then what is it worth? What is it but a
 mockery of human woe?

And if he, who bids suffering men
 come to him for rest, is at hand, and
 everywhere at hand where there is suffer-
 ing, then here is a doctrine—and it is
 nothing less than the Omnipresence of
 Christ. That doctrine gives all its vitality
 and power to this glowing promise, send-
 ing it into deeper depths of sorrowing
 hearts and giving life to the dead.

A I M S .

"What shall I do lest life in silence pass?
 And if it do,
 And never prompt the bray of noisy brass,
 What need'st thou rue?
 Remember, aye the ocean's deeps are mute;
 The shallows roar;
 Worth is the ocean; fame is but the bruit
 Along the shore."—SCHILLER.

The world swarms with busy life. Its multitudes are all astir. There is no quiescence here. Humanity was put in earnest motion as it came forth from the hand of God. It moves still. The impulse that drove it first hurries it forward yet. Its current glides peacefully along in smooth and even places, or breaking in fearful haste o'er rocky ledges, and sharp, deep chasms, it frets and foams and roars as great Niagara. What a sight to witness the windings and counter currents of human life? And beholding them, one asks, Why these mysterious evolutions? Why these strange meanderings? Could not some beaten path be found, and all glide quietly along some single highway?

And what peculiar power is it that moves these living tides? Ah, the force that moves them all lies hidden deep within.—Thought, *busy thought*, is the secret spring that keeps in steady motion the countless things that flow along the thoroughfares of earth. Aims and ends, purposes and desires, though far beyond our ken, enveloped by the coarser foldings of our nature, shape the course and mold and fashion all our being. Many are the visions of the human soul, and bright ore the stars that glow in the firmament of human expectation. Yet these stars although they glitter, shine often only with the treacherous and delusive light of the glowing ignis fatuus. These orbs of light float airily along, ever evading the grasp of their pursuer, to the borders of some dangerous marsh, when suddenly they vanish, leaving their ill-fated victim to plunge the fearful mire and to perish amid the fearful gloom. Hopeful hearts dally with empty baubles, and trusting one with deceptive pleasures. The glow and heat of ambition's fires serve not so much to cheer and warm, as to blight, and wither, and consume. Externals are deceptive—gaudiness and tinsel have an

attractive power only equalled by their terrible repellent force. Trappings and show betray their thousands. Still man gazes upon what the world styles brilliant, and upon what seems great and high, until the head grows dizzy and the heart gets sick.

What foolish dreams stir the human mind, and that vain fancies flit about its airy chambers. Who reason calmly?—Who thinks soberly? Who sees clearly? It is plain that the multitudes do not.—The world is full of vanity. Man forgets his higher, in the contemplation of his lower nature. The flashing forth of his kindling genius obscure the more noble gifts of moral power and religious capability.

Time claims the study; eternity alone the *passing* thought. Man forgets his destiny, and acts as if he were firmly chained and forever fixed to the shores of earth.—His aims are ever toward a shining mark, yet rarely at substantial good. From false estimates he measures the worth of all he sees. He is thus misled. Wealth, and fame, and power; honor, and ease, pleasure, are not so valuable and ennobling as virtue and obedience, benevolence and labor.—Yet who measures those tinselled joys, or those chaste and worthy graces, by the standard of their real value, by the criterion of intrinsic worth? Goodness and purity, patience and faith, honesty and sobriety, meekness and love, are the prizes which, although within the grasp of the fallen and feeble, and poor, are nevertheless high and sublime enough to challenge the aims and desires, the ambition and hopes, of the wise and great, the gifted, the proud and the rich. Man mourns his many failures, and grieves sadly at his want of success.—But his objects are unwisely chosen, his aims are misdirected. Piety and goodness are rarely sought: fame and honor, wealth and power, are the gods of men.

"O sons of earth, attempt ye still to rise,
 By mountains on pill'd mountains to the
 skies?
 Heaven still with laughter the vain toll sur-
 veys,
 And buries madmen in the heaps they raise."

Sabbath School Lessons.*May 24th. 1863.***AARON'S DEATH.**

Numb. xx. 14-29.

I.—EDOM REFUSES A PASSAGE.

Idumea, the country of Edom, lay to the south west of the Dead Sea, directly in the way of the Israelites to Judea. *Moses sent.* In this message, Moses pleaded the common relationship of Israel and Edom; they were the descendants of the twin-brothers, Jacob and Esau. He pleaded their long and sore travel; their sufferings in Egypt; their Divine guidance; and promises if they be allowed a passage not to injure the country, to keep the highways, and to pay even for the water they might drink. Edom refused, and opposed their entrance with an army. He perhaps feared that so great a host could not be restrained from committing depredations; probably, too, the refusal of the King of Edom—owing to a revival of the old enmity concerning the loss of the birthright. *Israel turned away from him*—they might have forced a passage, but showed brotherly forbearance.

2. AARON'S DEATH.

In Mount Hor. This was a mountain on the southern border of Idumea. Here Aaron receives a message from God, that he must die on account of his disobedience at Meribah.—He submits without a murmur.

Learn 1. *How careful we should be to do just what God commands.* Because they had not acted in strict conformity with God's command, Moses and Aaron were not to enter Canaan. How many dishonour God by adding to his word things of their own devising!

2. *How base it is to refuse to help a brother.* "A brother is born for adversity."—God has set us in families that we may love and help each other.

3. *That brothers are often unkind.* From Cain and Abel, Jacob and Esau, and Joseph's brethren we see how sin blights brotherly love. Instead of loving and helping each other, brothers often hate and persecute each other.—How delightful the assurance that Christ is our Brother! Upon his generous, infinite, unchangeable love, we can always rely.

4. *To be always prepared for death.*—How would such a message as Aaron received sound to you? Could you lay aside your body as calmly as he did his priestly garments, and meet your God? If "gathered to your people," would you be "gathered" with the bad or with the good?

5. *Our great High Priest abideth forever.* The transference of Aaron's office, in this manner, to Eleazar, implied the truth, that as Israel ever required, so should they ever have, a high priest.

*May 31st.***THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES.**

MATT. xvi. 4. 12.

I. THE WARNING.

Our Lord had been conversing with the Pharisees and Saducees. The Pharisees affected extraordinary sanctity. They paid strict attention to external, but quite neglected internal religion; they sought the praise of man instead of the praise of God; John v. 44; in a word, they were hypocrites. The Saducees, like modern infidels, made great pretensions to be impartial enquirers after truth. Against these two classes of men, the disciples had more need to be on their guard than against the openly profane; and therefore our Lord repeats the warning, "Take heed and beware."

2. THE DISCIPLES' MISTAKE.

Putting a literal construction upon Christ's words, the disciples supposed, that he meant to upbraid them for want of prudence and foresight, in neglecting to take with them their daily bread. They understood him to mean, that they should have no familiarity with the Pharisees and Sadducees, not even so much as to eat of their bread; that he wished not that his disciples should be indebted to them for anything, nor that they should incur the danger of partaking of the food of such bitter and unscrupulous enemies.

3. THEIR REPROOF.

Oh ye of little faith. Jesus thought it a far greater sin to mistrust him than to forget bread. Their former experiences of his power and goodness aggravated their sin.—Though they had forgotten to take with them bread. They had Him with them who could supply it. *But of the doctrine,* like leaven it was insinuating, pervading, corrupting.

Learn 1. *To be on your guard against the temptations of the wicked.* If you associate with them, though they are rich and clever, you will soon become like them. Seek the society of the good, for though they may be poor and despised by the world, they possess the true riches and honour, and will make you like themselves.

2. *To be spiritually-minded.* Too much care about earthly things, keeps us from understanding Christ; Matt. vi. 19-22.

3. *Seek to understand Christ's words.* What you do not understand, ask Christ to explain; prayer is the best key to the Bible.

4. *Be mindful of God's bounties.* A grateful recollection of God's favours to us in the past would enable us to trust him for the future; *Psa. cvi.*

THE REV. J. DENHAM SMITH.

We were favoured with a three days' visit last week from this brother, beloved for his works' sake, who delivered addresses in Freemasons' hall on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, and on Wednesday afternoon.

On the first evening he spoke at some length on that inexhaustible chapter, *Isaiah liii.*, and then, previously to prayer, read a number of letters, principally from persons present, who earnestly desired, and some of whom evidently expected, to find rest and peace before they left. The address was upon those words in *Exodus*, "And will by no means clear the guilty." After showing that God, the foundations of whose throne are righteousness and judgment, cannot clear the guilty, and bringing in all the world guilty before God, the good tidings were declared that God can save the guilty because their guilt has been laid on the Holy One.

In the course of his first address, Mr. Smith related the following circumstance: I was standing, a few days since, on a platform in a central English town at the close of one of our meetings, when a Polish nobleman came up to me and said, "Here is a clergyman who wishes to speak to you." The clergyman said, "I have been preaching for thirteen years, and I now see I never believed a word I preached. What will the world say? It will call me a hypocrite. Oh, I am a lost soul." I left a mass of souls that evening rejoicing over their newly-found Saviour, but this minister remained in deep soul agony. In the morning he called upon me, and said, "Sir, I wish to unburden my mind to you; I should have taken my life, but that I feared to meet God." After he had told me his story, I said, "Well, I question if you ever knew the truth.—Did you ever know this truth—that that dark, lying, deceitful self, over which you are groaning because it is so bad (although it is a thousand times more wicked than

you are aware)—do you know that God has judged and condemned it, and that it has passed its doom? The Lord of glory bore your sin in his body on the tree, and, instead of being so sorrowful that your old self is no better, you should be giving God thanks that the old man is crucified, nailed to a tree, slain, dead. 'I am crucified with Christ.'" I put into his hand a copy of a little book I have just brought out, *Life Truths*, asking him to read it; and he left me. A few days after I found him at a meeting in another town, whither he had followed me; and when we were singing

"Happy day, happy day,
When Jesus washed my sins away,"

his face was one of the most radiant of all; and afterwards he told us how the change was wrought: "I saw myself judged; I found myself on the other side of my doom, with the cross of Jesus between the broken law and me; and I have preached it to my people, for my heart spoke out of the abundance of its peace."

There can be no doubt of Mr. Smith's ministry being largely owned of God.—The substitution of the Lord Jesus, God's judgment of sin in the person of his dear Son, the immediateness and completeness of salvation on the awakened sinner believing in Jesus; these blessed doctrines he has powerfully realized in his own experience, and doubtless has been specially commissioned to preach to others. For nearly three years past Mr. Smith has been itinerating throughout the United Kingdom. In a few weeks he settles in Dublin, a place of worship having been built for him, capable of seating from three to four thousand people. He consequently does not expect again to visit London as he has done, so that these were farewell services. "One sorrows to leave scenes like these," said he in the course of the closing service; "we separate at night, but we shall meet at daybreak. We separate each to go on his beat, and to some it will be a lonely, and painful, and weary way; but we join at sunrise. It is now the world's day, but our night; but it is far spent, and our day is at hand. I charge you all to be out on your beat. The great Watchman says, 'Surely I come quickly.' Then will He wipe away the last tear, and then we shall

all know how true it is that all things now work together for good to them who love God (Rom. viii. 28, had been the evening's text). We shall say then, 'I had my trials, weary days and nights, sickness, and losses and conflicts; I fought many a hard fight with the great foe; but now I see indeed that

"Trials made the promise sweet,
Trials gave new life to prayer,
Trials brought me to his feet,
Laid me low, and kept me there."

Many burdened souls were present, whom Mr. Smith could hardly leave; again and again he addressed a word specially to them. Thus almost at the last he said, "I saw this morning an eminent citizen of this great city, and who has been, too, an eminent author, but is now passing speedily to the grave. I told him that he had only now to learn that he was an eminent sinner, and that he had an eminent Saviour. Yes, dear souls, it must be so with us all. Until we are brought to the end of ourselves, there is no rest for the sole of our foot."

That God has graciously crowned these meetings with his rich blessing we feel assured.—*Revival.*

DRAWN—NOT DRIVEN.

Those who live beside the "Narrows" sometimes see a huge man-of-war moving majestically down towards the open sea.—That motion is a mystery; for not a yard of canvas is unfurled, not a sail is visible. His spars are as bare as the forest limbs in November; yet he swims straight onward in the teeth of a fresh inland breeze. But on the other side of the war-ship is a brave little steamer lashed fast to him, and leading him captive to the ocean. "*Draw me,*" the great ship seems to say to the little tug, "and I will go along with thee." Yet the insignificant steam-tug would make but a sorry figure if pitched into battle with the black-browed seventy-four.

So have we seen a gentle, holy-hearted wife constraining by the cords of love a strong-willed husband. By driving she could not move him one inch. She could not force him to church, to the prayer-meeting, to his neglected Bible, or to his Saviour. But when she fastened the silken

hawsers of affection to his soul, and applied the power of strong persuasion, it was delightful to see the great resolute will "go after her." Nor did anything so draw him towards the religion of the Cross as her consistent, holy, sweet-tempered life of piety. Her motive power lay wholly in attraction.

Here is a principle that touches all of us in our attempts to do others good.—Compulsion moves no one. Storms of invective only make prejudice draw its garment more closely about its shoulders.—But let overpowering love pour its noon-tide flood upon him, and the garment is flung off in an instant. God has given his people no commission to drag on sinners to the cross of Christ. He that *winneth* souls is wise. We have seen parents who seized their children by the ear-tip, and lugged them along by main force towards the path of virtue. But we have seen wiser ones, who themselves walked so winsomely that they drew their little ones by magic magnetism after them. We have heard preachers, too, who dealt about them Ezekiel's thunders, and cursed from the pulpit the enemies of God. But they made no man a friend of God. Wiser men than they have we heard—men who took their pitch from the angel's song of Bethlehem; and while "glory to God in the highest" was their aim, "good-will to men" was the method of their success.

Remember who it was that might have scourged us with the scorpion-lash of his just vengeance, but condescended to woo us towards heaven by the pierced hand of his compassion. And every soul that has ever come to Christ in sincere faith has been drawn there. Terror can only drive. Love attracts and saves. The response of every converted man to the claims of Jesus has been: "Draw me, and I will run after thee. Lead me in paths of righteousness; I will try to follow. Lord! what wilt thou have me to do?" Hell will be full of souls who were driven there by the condemning voice of justice. Heaven will be full of rejoicing souls who were drawn by the attractions of the Cross.—*T. L. Cuyler.*

COURAGE, MY FRIEND!

A traveller was climbing a steep mountain road. The path was rough and broken.— Deep chasms and bottomless, made the way dangerous. The road seemed interminable, for height rose above height, seemingly without end. The traveller's strength was almost exhausted, and he frequently paused, and, sighing with discouragement, said:

"I must go back. I shall never reach the top."

Fortunately, the traveller's guide was a man of strength and spirit. He met this cry of despondency by cheerily saying:

"Courage, my friend, and we shall soon be at the top."

Thus cheered, the traveller rallied, and pressing on reached the top at last. Then a glorious landscape burst upon his vision. He saw vast plains covered with verdure, adorned with trees, studded with palaces, towers, and villages, and threaded by streams which looked like currents of molten silver. The scene enraptured him, and he exclaimed:

"What a magnificent spectacle! I feel more than repaid for all my fatigue in getting here. It is splendid! I am ashamed of my luck of courage while on the way up."

Cannot the discouraged Christian learn a lesson from this traveller's joy? He finds the work of life heavy, dull, and monotonous; the road is steep, rough, at times dangerous. He toils slowly on, grows dispirited, and is tempted to give up the struggle for salvation, and to drift with the multitude along the seemingly smoother road to destruction. To that disheartened soul the Saviour's voice speaks, could he but hear it, saying:

"Courage, soul! you will soon reach the top. There is no difficulty in the way but what has been overcome by millions of my disciples.— You can overcome it too. Fear not, little one; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom!"

Listen, O tried heart, until you hear that faithful voice. Be of good cheer! The distance to be travelled is short, never so short as now, grows shorter every hour. At the end stands the city of God, the abode of Jesus, the glories of heaven, the beginning of endless felicity. Think of the hour when, having finished the toilsome travel of the earthly journey, your soul is ravished by its vision of heaven—when intoxicated with bliss you will exclaim:

"This is the angels' land,
Where all the blessed stand
See all with gladness springing.
Here is no cross, no sorrow,
No parting on the morrow."

SUNDAY EVENING HYMN.

Another day of heavenly rest,
And angels' toil is ended,
And to the chorus of the bless'd
The last hymn has ascended.
Tranquil as an infant's sleep
Eve shadows cot and meadow;
Let Thy peace with calm as deep
The wearied spirit shadow.

As of old the apostle band
All their labors bore Thee,
Lowly at thy feet we stand,
Lay our work before Thee.
Pardon Thou the imperfect deed,
Crown the weak endeavor,
Prosper Thou the heavenly seed,
Work Thou with us ever.

Thou know'st how sin and error e'er
In all our efforts mingle,
How seldom mortal eye is clear,
Or human purpose single.
Let Thy blood, O dying Lord,
Blot out all our evil;
Let Thy touch, O living Word,
All our errors shrivel.

Let Thy lambs we sought to feed.
By Thy hand be nourish'd;
Let them be Thy lambs indeed,
In thy bosom cherish'd.
To the griefs we cannot reach
Breathe Thou consolation;
To the hearts we cannot teach
Bring Thou Thy salvation.

May the tone of this day's prayers
Vibrate through the seven;
Sabbaths, work-days, pleasures, tears—
Mould us all for heaven.
That taking thus each joy and woe
As Thy gifts parental,
To us life's daily bread may grow
Viands sacramental.

"Thy Marahs as well as thy Elims are appointed by God. A gracious pillar cloud is before thee. He may 'lead thee about,' but he will not lead thee wrong." "Blessed be his name," said a tried believer "He maketh my feet like hinds' feet" (literally, "equaleth them.") He *equaleth* them for every precipice, every ascent every leap.

WHICH DEATH?

DEATH is terrible or beautiful:—terrible when a sinner rushes into eternity, into the immediate presence of a rejected Saviour and an offended God; beautiful when a Christian walks through the valley of the shadow of death, fearing no evil, and with sins forgiven, and robes made white in the blood of the Lamb, enters into the rest that remains for the people of God.—Sudden death may cut off the impenitent in the midst of his sins, or take the believer quickly home to glory; lingering disease may fail to lead a hardened soul to Christ, or it may be a continued and ever increasing blessing to him who through faith goes on from conquering to conquer, until death is robbed of its sting and the grave of its victory. Oftentimes God places the deaths of his children and of unbelievers in striking contrast, to show his kindness to his own, and the righteous retribution which must come upon the guilty sinner. The two facts which follow illustrate this, and they are told in the simplest manner; for God's own hand has given them the most vivid colouring.

In southern New Hampshire a noble mountain rises heavenward in solitary grandeur. Its sharp cut outline of bare and massive rock rests in bold relief against the clear blue sky; and from its far reaching base stretches away, on every side, that diversified scenery of hills and valleys glistening lakes and silvery streams, for which the Switzerland of America is so justly celebrated. From the summit of this mountain the scene is one of unsurpassed beauty. Here, if anywhere, man will feel that he is alone with his God; and cold must be his heart, and his soul a dreary waste of sin, if he does not feel like praising Him who "made the earth by his power, established the world by wisdom, and stretched out the heavens by his discretion." The mountain, grand and solemn, speaks of God; and as I have gazed upon it for long hours, I have involuntarily said, in the words of Coleridge to Mount Blanc—

"Tell thou the silent sky,
And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun,
Earth with her thousand voices praises God!"
But there was a man living in summer

time upon that mountain-side, who thought not of God, except to profane his name.—His little dwelling stood just at the end of the horse-path, where travellers are wont to rest themselves before making the tedious ascent on foot. On a summer afternoon a party was descending the mountain, and stopped at this house. The keeper was indulging in most shocking profanity. His visitors were horrified at his oaths, and one of them ventured to remonstrate with him kindly.—He asked him if he had no thought of a future state, no belief in a God, in a heaven and a hell; if he had no fear of death, and that he might be cut off in his sins. With an oath, and shaking his clenched fist toward the sky, as if in defiance of God, he exclaimed "I will live a hundred years for God Almighty, man, or the devil!" No more was said; and the party, leaving the wicked man alone in his dwelling, passed on. Soon afterward, another group of mountaineers stopped at the house. The well-known face of the keeper did not appear. They entered, and there lay the man—dead! No trace of disease, no marks of violence, were to be found.—God had called him in such an hour as he thought not. The miserable man had defied his Maker, and was quickly summoned to the bar of God to receive his awful sentence. Punishment followed speedily in the footsteps of sin; there was no time for repentance; his soul was lost.

That death was terrible!

When a boy I loved to visit at the house of an aged woman, a devoted Christian.—No little children were there with whom I could play, but the good-hearted old lady always made me happy. Every wrinkle on her face seemed a smile to me; every look and every word was full of kindness. Love to God had taken complete possession of her; and made her life a pleasure to herself and a blessing to all who knew her. She lived quietly and happily; and as she walked on into the sunset of life, she had nearer glimpses of heaven, and patiently waited till the Lord should call her home. He did call her, and how gently! One morning she did not appear at the usual time. Her son went to her room; and there he saw the good old lady kneeling at her bedside, her head inclined forward

on the clothes, and an open Bible in a chair beside her. She was dead! God had taken her to himself even while she was praying; her soul and her prayer went together to her home in heaven; her hope was changed to glad fruition, her faith to sight, her prayer to praise!

That death was beautiful!

“How blest the righteous when he dies;
When sinks a weary soul to rest,
How mildly beam the closing eyes,
How gently heaves the expiring breast!
So fades a summer cloud away,
So sinks the gale when storms are o'er,
So gently shuts the eye of day,
So dies a wave along the shore.”

Reader, which shall be yours—the death of the Christian or of the impenitent? It may come suddenly or may not; God tells us neither the day nor the hour; he only says, “Be ye also ready!

“There are no acts of pardon passed
In the cold grave to which we haste.”

The present is all we can call our own. God invites us by his providence and in his word to seek for peace with him *now*. “Now” is the only time God gives us.—That word rings out clear in all his commands to us; on it hangs our hope of salvation: “*Now* is the accepted time; behold *now* is the day of salvation.” “Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest.”

Let each one pray, “Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.” Let each one make sure that he will be ready if the Master should say: “This night thy soul shall be required of thee!”—*Tract Journal*.

THE GREAT NEGLECT.

How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?—HEB. ii. 3.

WHAT is neglect? Inattention, carelessness, the omission or postponement of something which ought at once to be attended to and done.

What great matter is awfully neglected? Salvation—the great salvation. Not education, business nor pleasure—not the farm, the family, nor the body, but the soul, the soul's everlasting salvation; those

are generally and often unduly minded? this is extensively and awfully slighted.

Who are the neglecters of the great salvation? Those who neglect prayer, the holy Scriptures, and the house of God, and who postpone the seeking of salvation to a future period. This large class includes persons of all ages, circumstances, and conditions of life, children, young people, aged men and women, the rich, the poor, learned and unlearned, religious professor, and outwardly profane; although differing in other respects, they are fearfully agreed in this—the neglect of the great salvation.

How is this neglect to be accounted for? The world is enticing, business pressing, pleasure alluring, and example misleading. Besides, human nature itself is fallen, depraved; unfeeling, unbelieving, prone to evil, and deadly set against that which is good; and “the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not.” Thus the neglect of salvation is to be accounted for, though neither justified nor excused, but deeply deplored.

What will be the consequences of this neglect? Neglect ruins. By it a business fails, a ship will sink, and a farm will only yield thorns and weeds. An infant by neglect will die, and salvation neglected, the soul will perish for ever. There is a deep yawning pit of outer darkness, fire, brimstone, and everlasting torment, and no way of escape is open to the neglecters of salvation.

What then should the neglecters do?—They should listen now to the sound of alarm, admonition, and invitation, be awake, repent, cry mightily to God for mercy, “behold the Lamb of God,” “flee from the wrath to come,” and “lay hold on eternal life.”

J. M.

Hounslow.

Well might Coleridge say that the fairest flower he ever saw climbing round a poor man's window, was not so beautiful in his eye as the Bible which he saw lying within