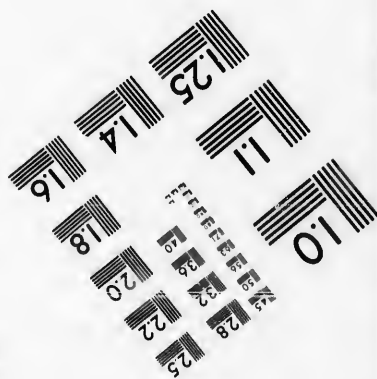
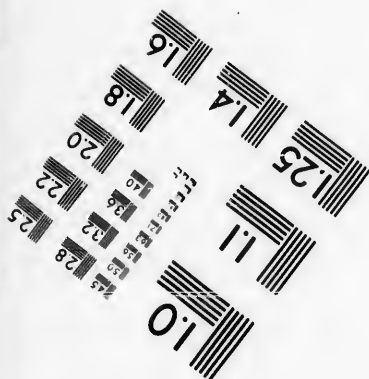
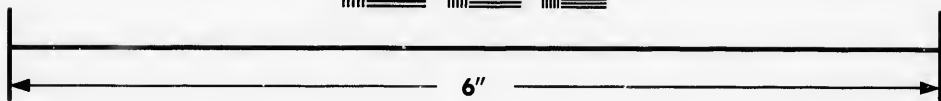
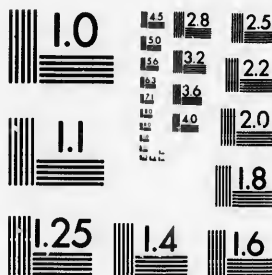


**IMAGE EVALUATION  
TEST TARGET (MT-3)**



**Photographic  
Sciences  
Corporation**

23 WEST MAIN STREET  
WEBSTER, N.Y. 14580  
(716) 872-4503

**CIHM/ICMH  
Microfiche  
Series.**

**CIHM/ICMH  
Collection de  
microfiches.**



**Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions / Institut canadien de microreproductions historiques**

**© 1987**

Technical and Bibliographic Notes/Notes techniques et bibliographiques

The Institute has attempted to obtain the best original copy available for filming. Features of this copy which may be bibliographically unique, which may alter any of the images in the reproduction, or which may significantly change the usual method of filming, are checked below.

L'Institut a microfilmé le meilleur exemplaire qu'il lui a été possible de se procurer. Les détails de cet exemplaire qui sont peut-être uniques du point de vue bibliographique, qui peuvent modifier une image reproduite, ou qui peuvent exiger une modification dans la méthode normale de filmage sont indiqués ci-dessous.

- Coloured covers/  
Couverture de couleur
- Covers damaged/  
Couverture endommagée
- Covers restored and/or laminated/  
Couverture restaurée et/ou pelliculée
- Cover title missing/  
Le titre de couverture manque
- Coloured maps/  
Cartes géographiques en couleur
- Coloured ink (i.e. other than blue or black)/  
Encre de couleur (i.e. autre que bleue ou noire)
- Coloured plates and/or illustrations/  
Planches et/ou illustrations en couleur
- Bound with other material/  
Relié avec d'autres documents
- Tight binding may cause shadows or distortion  
along interior margin/  
La reliure serrée peut causer de l'ombre ou de la  
distorsion le long de la marge intérieure
- Blank leaves added during restoration may  
appear within the text. Whenever possible, these  
have been omitted from filming/  
Il se peut que certaines pages blanches ajoutées  
lors d'une restauration apparaissent dans le texte,  
mais, lorsque cela était possible, ces pages n'ont  
pas été filmées.
- Additional comments:/  
Commentaires supplémentaires:

- Coloured pages/  
Pages de couleur
- Pages damaged/  
Pages endommagées
- Pages restored and/or laminated/  
Pages restaurées et/ou pelliculées
- Pages discoloured, stained or foxed/  
Pages décolorées, tachetées ou piquées
- Pages detached/  
Pages détachées
- Showthrough/  
Transparence
- Quality of print varies/  
Qualité inégale de l'impression
- Includes supplementary material/  
Comprend du matériel supplémentaire
- Only edition available/  
Seule édition disponible
- Pages wholly or partially obscured by errata  
slips, tissues, etc., have been refilmed to  
ensure the best possible image/  
Les pages totalement ou partiellement  
obscurcies par un feuillet d'errata, une peiure,  
etc., ont été filmées à nouveau de façon à  
obtenir la meilleure image possible.

This item is filmed at the reduction ratio checked below/  
Ce document est filmé au taux de réduction indiqué ci-dessous.

10X	12X	14X	16X	18X	20X	22X	24X	26X	28X	30X	32X
					✓						

The copy filmed here has been reproduced thanks to the generosity of:

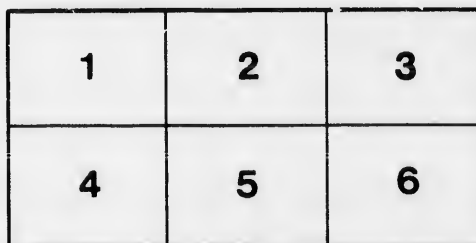
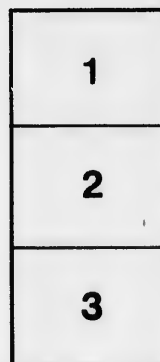
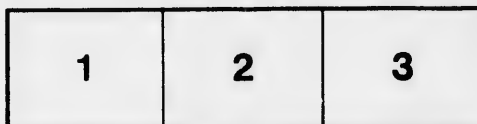
La Bibliothèque de la Ville de Montréal

The images appearing here are the best quality possible considering the condition and legibility of the original copy and in keeping with the filming contract specifications.

Original copies in printed paper covers are filmed beginning with the front cover and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression, or the back cover when appropriate. All other original copies are filmed beginning on the first page with a printed or illustrated impression, and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression.

The last recorded frame on each microfiche shell contains the symbol  $\rightarrow$  (meaning "CONTINUED"), or the symbol  $\nabla$  (meaning "END"), whichever applies.

Maps, plates, charts, etc., may be filmed at different reduction ratios. Those too large to be entirely included in one exposure are filmed beginning in the upper left hand corner, left to right and top to bottom, as many frames as required. The following diagrams illustrate the method:



L'exemplaire filmé fut reproduit grâce à la générosité de:

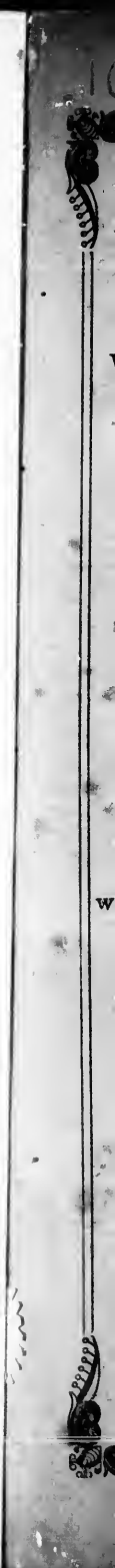
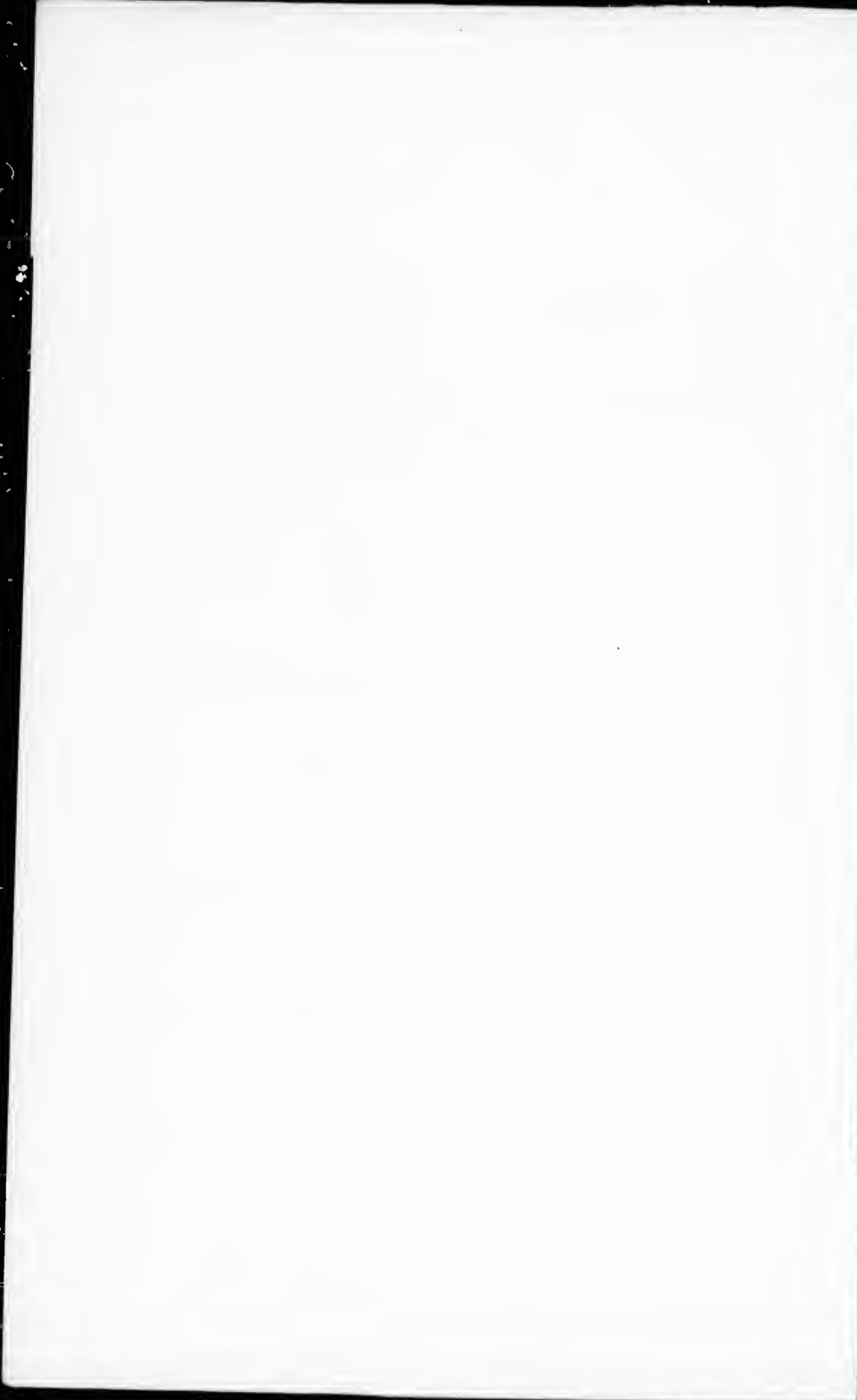
La Bibliothèque de la Ville de Montréal

Les images suivantes ont été reproduites avec le plus grand soin, compte tenu de la condition et de la netteté de l'exemplaire filmé, et en conformité avec les conditions du contrat de filmage.

Les exemplaires originaux dont la couverture en papier est imprimée sont filmés en commençant par le premier plat et en terminant soit par la dernière page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration, soit par le second plat, selon le cas. Tous les autres exemplaires originaux sont filmés en commençant par la première page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration et en terminant par la dernière page qui comporte une telle empreinte.

Un des symboles suivants apparaît sur la dernière image de chaque microfiche, selon le cas: le symbole  $\rightarrow$  signifie "A SUIVRE", le symbole  $\nabla$  signifie "FIN".

Les cartes, planches, tableaux, etc., peuvent être filmés à des taux de réduction différents. Lorsque le document est trop grand pour être reproduit en un seul cliché, il est filmé à partir de l'angle supérieur gauche, de gauche à droite, et de haut en bas, en prenant le nombre d'images nécessaire. Les diagrammes suivants illustrent la méthode.



G1371

41485

FILIAL RESPECT,

OR THE

WAY TO RENDER FAMILY BLESSINGS PERPETUAL,

A SERMON,

By JOEL FISK. A.M.,

Pastor of the Congregational Church, Philipsburg, Canada;

SUGGESTED BY THE DEATH OF HIS FATHER,

DEACON JOSES FISK,

WAITSFIELD, VERMONT,

WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE, FEB. 5th, 1847, AGED 32 YEARS AND 6 MONTHS.

~~~~~  
"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."—Rev. xiv. 13.  
~~~~~

MONTREAL :

PRINTED BY J. C. BECKET, 211½, SAINT PAUL STREET.

—  
M D C C C X L V I I .

781

BIBLIOTHEQUE  
PHILÉAS GAGNON,  
QUÉBEC, CANADA.



# FILIAL RESPECT,

OR THE

WAY TO RENDER FAMILY BLESSINGS PERPETUAL,

## A SERMON,

BY JOEL FISK, A. M.,

Pastor of the Congregational Church, Philipsburg, Canada;

SUGGESTED BY THE DEATH OF HIS FATHER,

DEACON MOSES FISK,

WAITSFIELD, VERMONT,

WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE, FEB. 6th, 1847, AGED 82 YEARS AND 6 MONTHS.

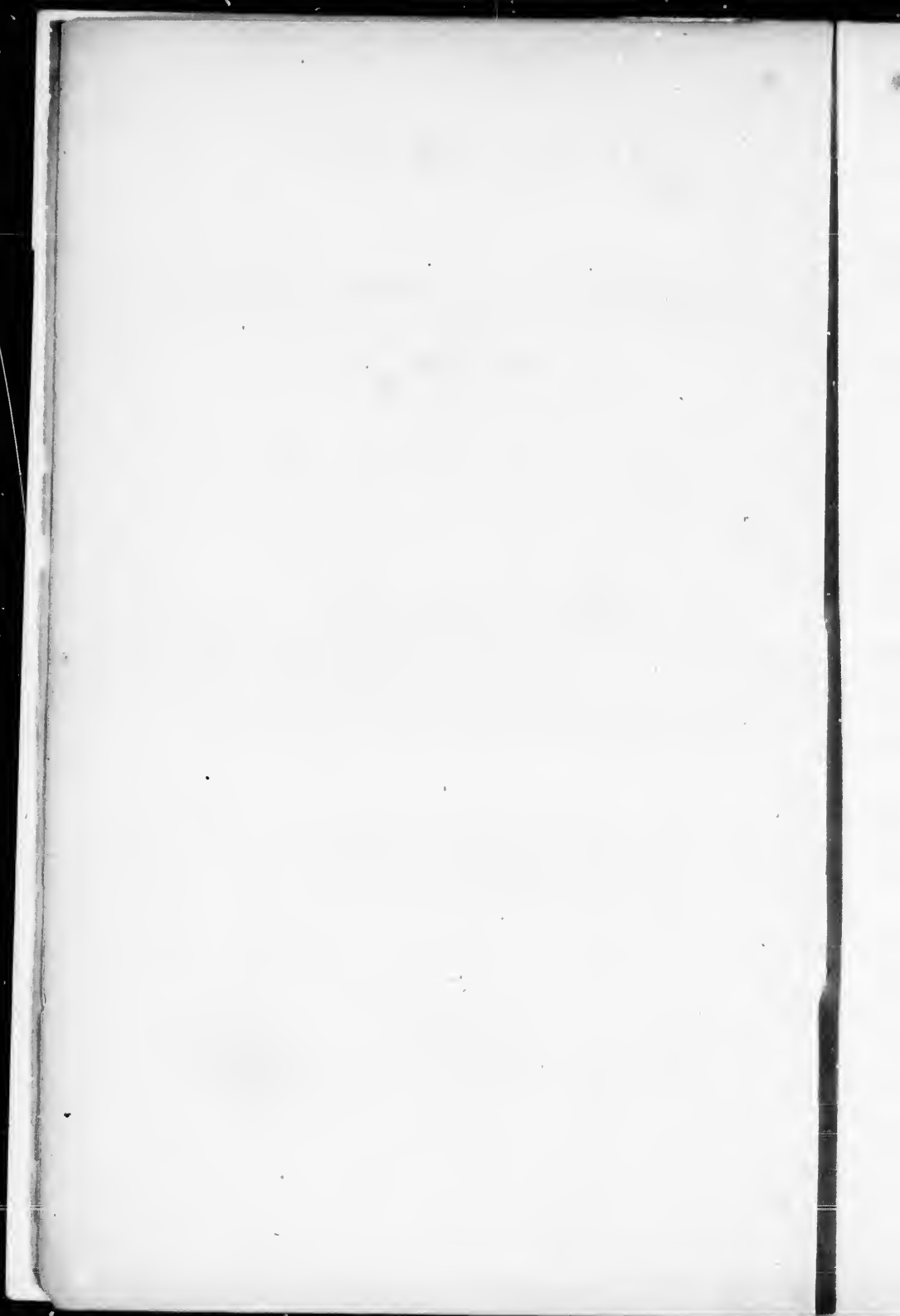
~~~~~  
"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."—Rev. xiv. 13.  
~~~~~

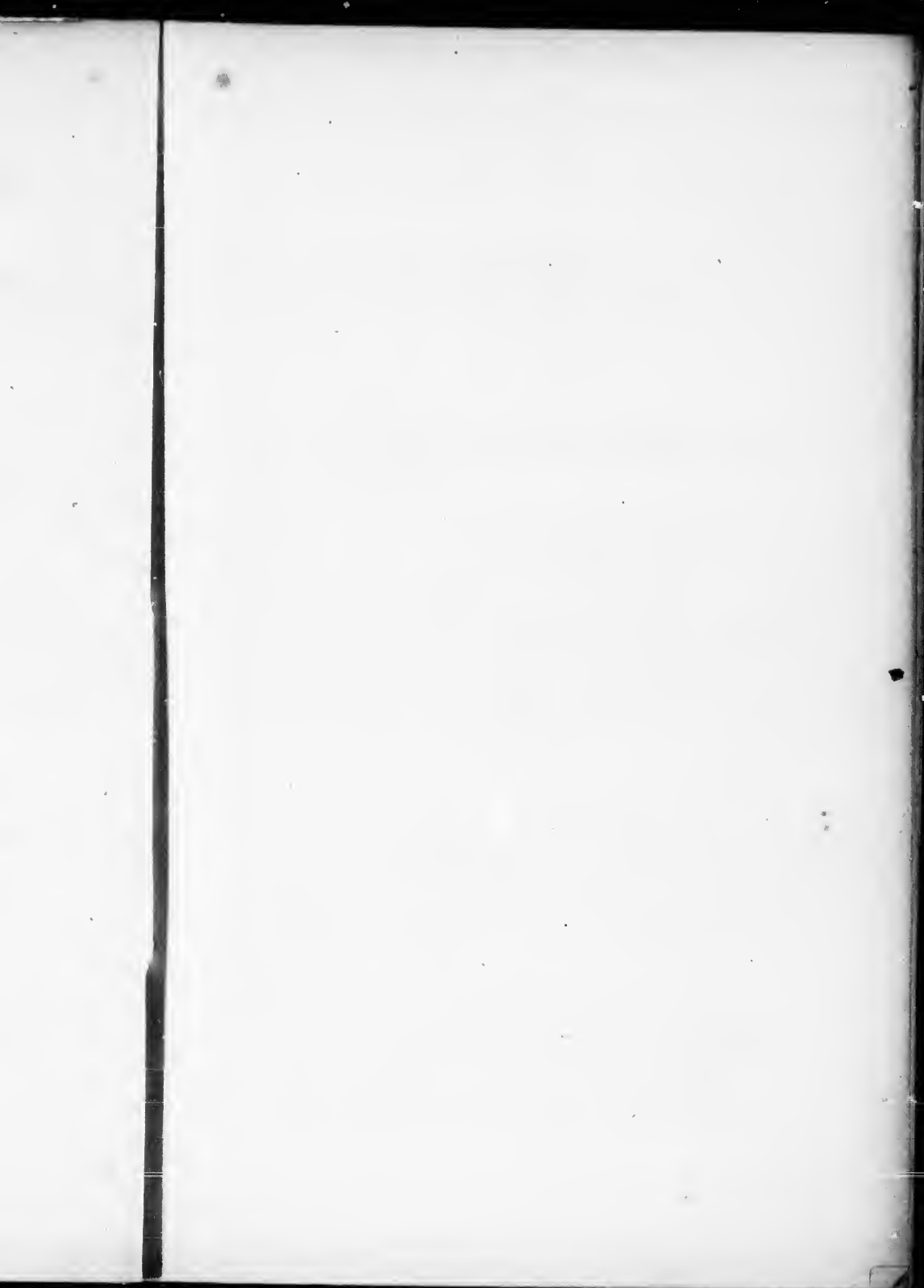
MONTREAL :

PRINTED BY J. C. BECKET, 211½, SAINT PAUL STREET.

MDCCCXLVII.







“

in  
fi  
re

fo  
e:  
ce  
fa  
sh  
de  
pe  
D  
th  
hi  
su  
co

S

hi

to

## FILIAL RESPECT, &c.

---

“ But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children’s children ; to such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.”—Psalms ciii. 17, 18.

The object of this discourse is to show how family blessings may be made perpetual, and also to render a tribute of filial respect to the memory of a beloved parent, who has recently finished his course on earth.

After struggling with an overwhelming tide of depravity for nearly two thousand years, the church became almost extinct, but God, in order to preserve her from utter ruin, centred her interests in one family. With the head of that family he established his covenant, and declared, “ In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” Thus Jehovah determined that the blessings of his grace should flow on perpetually in the line of families till time should end. So David, who had taken hold of God’s covenant, fully believed that his mercy was from everlasting to everlasting, and that his righteousness would descend to children’s children to such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.

Several important truths contained in this passage of Scripture, are worthy our most serious consideration.

I. *The covenant God proposed to Abraham, and through him to all heads of families, is a covenant of grace.*

Its gracious promises are wholly gratuitous. God gave to Abraham intimations of his merciful loving kindness,

which he determined to manifest to his own chosen people in all ages, and he made a covenant of grace with him which the law, that was 430 years after, could not disannul ; and this covenant was not for the family of Abraham alone, but for all the families of the earth who would lay hold upon it. God established it for the interests of his church, and according to his own good will and pleasure. It was all of grace from the foundation to the topstone.

II. *This covenant is to be received and kept by faith.*

Grace from God, faith in man. There must be a simple and firm reliance on the promise. Abraham *believed* God ; this was the receiving of the covenant ; it was the *keeping* of the covenant.

Thus any parent may enter into covenant with God for himself and his offspring, by believing what he has spoken —by placing implicit confidence in his word. It is all by faith. No outward act, performance, or ceremony can possibly bring us into covenant with God, if faith be wanting. Abraham's faith was counted for righteousness ; and so will be the faith of every truly believing parent.

III. *The faith of the parent in God's covenant, is evinced by remembering his commandments to do them.*

He will show his faith by his works. With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Indeed, unless there be the *confession* of the mouth, we have no evidence that the heart *believes*.

God will never admit that any parent has taken hold of his covenant by faith, whose works do not accord with his holy requirements. As well talk of a storm upon the smooth sea, where not a wave is stirred, as to talk of a man being in covenant with God, who has no corresponding works. Where the cause is, there will be the effect.

Let us be particular, and for a few moments consider some of the works of the believing parent, which evince that he has taken hold of, and is keeping God's covenant.

1st, *He places the sign or seal of the covenant upon him-*

*self and his offspring.* Abraham did this on the very day that he accepted the covenant. And thus do all believing parents who have a right understanding of the subject. They rejoice that they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them; Isa. lxxv. 23. So they consecrate their children early to God, have the sign of the covenant put upon them, firmly believing that in due time God will seal them of the Holy Ghost, and make them heirs of glory.

And this leads the parent,

2d, *To make his children subject of constant earnest prayer.*

From the first of their existence they are presented daily, and sometimes hourly at the throne of grace. The parent who has taken hold of God's covenant, and has had the seal or the sign placed upon his child, feels that the outward sign is nothing without the inward grace; the washing of regeneration: the renewing of the Holy Spirit; and for the speedy accomplishment of this inward work, he pleads with many strong cries and tears.

But this earnest spirit of prayer leads him,

3d, *To be faithful in diligently teaching his children the precepts of the Lord.*

Day by day such parents strive to make an indelible impression of Divine truth upon the minds of their children: When they rise up, and when they lie down; when they go out, and when they come in; by the way, and in the field; in the shop, and by the domestic hearth, they improve every opportunity and every circumstance for impressing upon the young mind a realizing sense of the presence of the great God, and the vast importance of always remembering his commandments to do them.

And the believing parent evinces his firm hold of God's covenant,

4th, *By maintaining daily religious worship in his family.*

Morning and evening his domestic altar sends to heaven the sweet incense of prayer and praise. As soon would he

think of attempting to nourish the bodies of his children, and cause them to grow up to the stature of men and women without daily food, as to imagine that he could train them up in the fear and admonition of the Lord, without the daily worship of Jehovah in his house. The habit of family prayer, attended by the reading of the holy Scriptures, and often by a song of praise, becomes fixed, and no ordinary circumstance can possibly interrupt, its regular course. All the members of the household expect morning and evening worship, just as certainly as they expect their regular meals.

How can a *prayerless* family escape the fulfilment of Jehovah's curse upon their own heads, as spoken by the mouth of the prophet:—*Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name.* Jer. 10, 25.

Surely no head of a family who has truly taken hold of God's covenant for himself and his offspring, can be willing to stand a single day in a position, when the same indignation of the Lord that must eventually roll over the heathen, will also take him and his household in its course, and inevitably sweep them to perdition!

But,

5th, *The believing parent governs his family.*

God said that he knew Abraham that he would *command* his children and his household after him. And Abraham's strong faith in the promise of God, led him so to do. And the firmer any parent takes hold of the promises of the covenant, the more decided will he be in governing his children according to the precepts of the Bible; God will know him to be faithful in this all-important part of parental duty. Still he is not arbitrary nor a tyrant in his house; no: he governs with a father's love, making his children feel that every command given, and every punishment inflicted, is designed for their good, and is in obedience to the requirements of the Lord. Thus a deep and an abiding impression is made upon the minds of the children, that God and their parents must be obeyed; and it will soon become

their pleasure to do what they know will be pleasing to their parents, whether they have a positive command or not.

The child whose will has once been subdued by the judicious management of a kind parent, will ever after yield cheerful obedience, and will be easily subdued by the influences of the Divine Spirit, and made a subject in early life, of renewing grace ; and he will then find great delight in the law of the Lord. But the child, which stands up in stubbornness against the will of his parent, will be the last to submit to the will of God. Indeed, there is but faint hope of the conversion of such a child. He will generally go on determined to have his own way, until the end of the way, that seemeth right unto him, proves to be the ways of death to his soul. Prov. xiv. 12.

The parent of true faith, foreseeing this monstrous evil, rescues his child from it, by teaching him to submit and to yield implicit obedience to all his requirements.

And this will lead the parent,

6th, *To set a godly example before his house.* He will never command his children in a way that he does not walk himself ; no, it will be *after* himself. He takes the Bible for his guide ; studies it before his children ; regulates his conduct by it ; appeals to it on all important and suitable occasions ; and he walks in the fear of God all the day long. His life and his profession walk hand in hand, and, both united, evince the genuineness of his faith. And he shows clearly, both in his prayers and in his conversation, that his whole reliance for strength to do his duty and for eternal life in the end, is upon the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ. And thus a deep and abiding impression is early made upon the minds of his children, that no duty can be performed acceptably without the aid of Divine grace ; nor will everlasting life ever be obtained, without pardon through the atoning blood of the Lamb. And while they realise the weakness of their own endeavours, the inefficiency of their own works, and the absolute necessity of an entire change of nature in order to please God and be fitted for heaven ;



the cords of parental instruction and parental example are so strongly entwined around their hearts, that they are held back from the grosser acts of iniquity, to which youth are too often prone, and are almost insensibly drawn along in the paths of wisdom, often desiring to have that thorough change wrought within by the influences of the Divine Spirit, which fills the soul with godly fear, purifies the heart, and bears good fruit. Such is the influence of the parent's faithful Christian instruction, and godly example, upon the minds and lives of his children.

But the believing parent evinces his faith,

7th, *By feeling a peculiar regard for the honour of God.* His anxiety is not so much that *his* children may be *saved*, as that God may be *honoured* in saving them according to his own plan. Sometimes the parent may lose sight of this, and his prayers are turned to selfishness, and cannot reach heaven as grateful incense. A pious mother had for a long while been praying for the conversion of her wayward son. But no favourable answer was granted to her supplications. Once a wicked man accosted her, "Do you know where your son was last night?" "O no; where was he?" "He was with a gang of gamblers all night, drinking, gambling, and swearing. There, see what becomes of your *children of the covenant!*" All this was spoken with a fiendish laugh—with a sort of hellish triumph! It went like a barbed arrow to the heart of the good woman, not merely because her son was running in the broad way to death, but because the covenant of her God was reproached by the wicked. She saw and felt that she had been feeling far too anxious about *her child*, and not enough for God's *honour*. She retired immediately from the labours of the day, and gave herself to fasting and prayer, beseeching the Lord God of Abraham, in the name of Jesus Christ, that he would save His covenant from the reproaches of the ungodly. Her prayer was now heard in heaven, and a speedy answer was granted. The profligate son was soon brought to his mother's feet in humble confession, and to the foot of the cross, with

brokenness of heart seeking pardon for all his crimes through the atoning blood of the Lamb. He found peace in believing, and afterwards became a devoted minister of the Gospel, and with a warm heart and strong mind, vindicated the honour of God's covenant made with believing parents.

And thus all parents who have taken hold of God's covenant and keep it, show peculiar concern for His honour and glory. The burden of their prayer often is, that God would honour his own institutions, and glorify himself in the conversion and salvation of their children. And such prayers ascend Jacob's ladder, up before the eternal throne, and quickly return again, in the richest blessings upon those families where they are offered.

#### IV. *The blessings of the covenant.*

These are well expressed in the text,—“But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; to such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.” Two things are here mentioned: mercy and righteousness. These are the Lord's which he has promised to give to them that fear him and keep his covenant. When those two things are granted unto us, all blessings are made sure, temporal, spiritual, and eternal. *They that fear the Lord shall not want any good thing.* Those who now take hold of God's covenant and keep it, are justified by faith in Christ, and are clothed in his righteousness. Thus they receive God's righteousness as a free gift, and are made partakers of his boundless mercy according to the good pleasure of his will. And faith will bear these blessings onward in one rich and overflowing stream to the end of time. Happy and peculiarly favoured are those whose lot is cast within such a line, who are made partakers of the blessings of that covenant, which descend from parents to children; who receive of that loving kindness of our God, which extends to children's children; and of that mercy which is unto thousands of them that love him and keep his commandments.

In confirmation of the sentiments expressed above, permit me to present some traits of character in the history of one man, a man obscure indeed, but one whose memory will ever be fondly cherished by a numerous posterity ; and one with whose life the happiness and usefulness of the speaker, as well as his hopes of eternal bliss hereafter, are strongly entwined.

Moses Fisk was the youngest son of Ebenezer Fisk, of Shelburne, Massachusetts, and was born in Sept., 1764. His parents were of the true puritan stamp. They had a large family of children who were consecrated to God in their early childhood, and were trained up in the fear and admonition of the Lord. And the mercy of the Lord has ever rested upon their posterity, and his righteousness has already descended to children's children even unto the fourth and fifth generations. Probably not less than 300 of the descendants of the said Ebenezer Fisk, have been, or are now, members of the church of Christ ; and numbers of them have held eminent stations in the church ; Rev. Pliny Fisk, the missionary, and Rev. Ezra Fisk, D. D., late of Goshen, N. Y., being among the number.

Moses, as I have observed, was the youngest son of his family. Owing to the times in which he lived, in the days of his childhood, his common education was greatly neglected, he only obtaining a very limited knowledge of reading and writing, and of the first rules of arithmetic. But from his pious parents he received a religious education, which was of priceless value. It attached him to the worship of God's house ; inclined him to remember the Sabbath day and to keep it holy ; held him back from grosser acts of iniquity, and guided him in the paths of virtue and morality.

At about the age of 25 he was united in marriage with Hannah Bachelidor, of Upton, Massachusetts. After spending a few years in his native town, and having been blessed with three sons, they removed to the town of Waitsfield, near the centre of Vermont. This, at that day, was very far away into the wilderness. The township spread over a

beautiful valley, embraced within the range of two lofty mountains, through the centre of which flows a delightful meandering stream, receiving the pure waters of an hundred rivulets which dash down the sides of the towering hills.

Into the midst of this valley, over hill and rock, through dismal swamp and thick forest, Mr. Fisk, with his young family, accompanied by some of his neighbours, wound his way, cutting their road as they went. He obtained a lot of land, felled a few trees near the centre, and erected a log cabin. A few families had preceded him, and others soon followed, so that an enterprising community of the sons and daughters of the Christian pilgrims were soon embosomed in that romantic secluded spot. Great was the peace and harmony that reigned among them; happy and joyful in their log huts, as the rich in their palaces of state.

But sickness and death was sent amongst them, and each felt for other's wo, and all drank the cup of sorrow together. The death of their first born son deeply affected the hearts of both my parents, and though they did not then know the grace of God experimentally, they felt assured that the conversation of their beloved little son for a few months previous to his departure, clearly evinced that he had a far better knowledge of spiritual things than themselves; yea, that he had received the grace of God into his heart, and had a foretaste of heavenly joy.

But it was a mournful day to them, when they followed the remains of their *first born* through the bush to the place which had been selected by the neighbourhood for the burial of their dead. And when they returned to their lonely cabin, they were deeply impressed that they needed a source of comfort above what earth could give. Impressions were then made upon their minds of the necessity of a heart-work in religion; impressions which were never wholly effaced; yet, having no minister of the Gospel to guide them, they wandered on several years longer in spiritual darkness. Still they were not wholly destitute of religious instruction. They had their Bible, and a good deacon from one of the

pilgrim churches in Massachusetts, had, from the commencement of the settlement, held meetings on the Sabbath, conducted by singing, prayer, the reading of the Scriptures, and of sermons.

At length the minister of the Gospel—the man who bringeth good tidings and publisheth peace—found his way over the mountains into that valley. Nearly all the settlers there were the enterprising sons and daughters of believing parents in the older States. They were the children of the covenant—had been baptised in the name of the Holy Trinity, and were followed by the earnest prayers of their parents and of the churches where they had been dedicated to God.

It was a field ripe for the harvest, where the labourer might enter and reap, and gather sheaves into the garner of the Lord. And he came in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of peace, and his preaching was in the demonstration of the spirit, and of power. He proclaimed the terrors of the law in awful grandeur, and published the glad tidings of salvation in strains as sweet as angels use. He laid open to view the deep depravity of the human heart, and then pointed out the nature and necessity of regeneration. His proclamations of wrath to the ungodly, and of mercy to the believing, were made the wisdom of God, and the power of God unto many.

In that marvellous work of Divine grace, the subject of this narrative and his wife were both sharers. The writer, their fourth son, and their first born in the wilderness, then not more than four years of age, can well remember that season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; an impression of heavenly things was left on his mind which will never be effaced. His parents, as they often described in after life, had then very deep and pungent convictions of sin; they felt that they had long been rejecting that mercy which was promised in the covenant their believing parents had entered into with God in their behalf. Their load of guilt lay heavy upon them, and they groaned under the burden day after day, till they were humbled in the dust,

and well nigh driven to despair, then light burst in upon their minds; they saw and rejoiced in the way of salvation and of reconciliation to God through faith in a crucified Redeemer. They were justified by faith, and had peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Their hearts were made glad in the Lord, and their mouths were filled with his high praises. Many of their neighbours rejoiced with them and praised the name of the Lord.

Then it was that the wilderness and the solitary places were made glad; the desert blossomed as the rose; the trees of the field clapped their hands, and all nature united in anthems of praise to the living God. So it seemed to those rejoicing converts.

It was indeed a joyful time in that new settlement. What was spoken of primitive Christians, was almost literally true of them—"And all that believed were together, and had all things common."

A Congregational church was organized, with which my parents both united in November, 1801, and in the month following my father was chosen deacon of the church, which office he held till his death, though for a few of the last years of his life he was unable to officiate. Immediately after uniting with the church, they presented their children to the Lord in the ordinance of baptism. And every new-born infant afterwards was consecrated in the same manner.

At the first consecration, several other whole families were also presented. It was a day of peculiar solemnity, of interest, and of joy.

The writer can well remember the scenes of that day, and the deep and serious feeling that sank down into his heart, when the man of God laid his hand upon his head. Fervent were the prayers of my beloved father on that morning; and kind and feeling were his instructions to his young household.

The children were all taken to the place of worship, in coarse, but in their best attire, neat and clean. No *meeting-house* then adorned that valley. Temples for worship were

found in barns, in log-houses, and sometimes in groves. It now being winter, the congregation were convened in a large kitchen. The whole settlement were there, men, women, and children.

The Ambassador of heaven was in the spirit on that Lord's day. He dwelt with peculiar interest upon the covenant God made with Abraham, and upon the great importance of all parents taking hold of that covenant by faith, and of showing their confidence in it by remembering God's commandments to do them; and by training up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Then, with great tenderness and love, he addressed the group of children about to be baptised, who were seated in a circle before him, explaining the reason why their parents presented them to the Lord, and exhorting them to be obedient to their commands, and to follow their instruction in all things. Then rose the fervent prayer for the blessing of the God of Abraham upon both parents and children. Then came forward the children, led by their believing, rejoicing parents, household by household, and beginning at the eldest, and going even unto the youngest, the minister of Christ sprinkled them with pure water, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

It was a season long to be remembered, and the blessing then invoked upon that interesting group of children will never cease to flow. Already has the righteousness of God descended to children's children in more than one of those family circles.

But I can speak in particular of only one, and as the mother of that family is still living, waiting her departure in a good old age, I know of no way to do her a greater honour or pleasure than to present some noble traits in the Christian character of the husband of her youth, and the companion of her riper years, with whom she lived almost 60 years in the most endearing ties of conjugal affection, and to whom she bore twelve children, nine sons and three daughters, eleven of whom grew up to years of manhood.

This man, the subject of this narrative, spent all the days of his Christian life in the same neighbourhood, and his name was scarcely known beyond the lofty hills that encircled the pleasant valley of his residence; yet the influence of his godly example, his wise counsels, and of his fervent prayers, has already extended far and wide; like the living brook that dashes perpetually over the rocks in front of his late home, and glides on unseen by the world, yet ceaseth not in its flow till it aids in filling up the wide banks of the mighty St. Lawrence, and even in bearing up the ten thousand stately ships that float upon the bosom of the broad Atlantic; so has gone forth the benign influence of his Christian life. And yet there was nothing very uncommon in his life, nothing but what may be seen in the life of every head of a family who takes the Bible for his guide, keeps God's covenant, and remembers all his commandments to do them. Still it may be both interesting and profitable to have some of his religious habits and his course of action distinctly marked.

1. *His punctuality in attending family worship.*

Nothing but sickness or absence would ever interrupt his season of morning and evening worship. His prayers were always concise, appropriate, and fervent: never wearying, but always interesting his household. The writer can well remember that when a very small boy, to himself the season of family worship was the most delightful portion of the day. It always affected his heart to hear his father pray. There was something in the tone of his voice, in the simplicity of his language, and in the earnestness of his pleading, which made those present feel that he was talking with God, and that God was very near. These seasons of devotion, accompanied by the reading of the Holy Scriptures, were interwoven in the minds of the children as a part of the necessary and unavoidable duties of the family; and they would have as soon expected to go without their regular meals as to miss the hour of prayer. This practice of morning and evening worship in his house, was continued for



more than forty-five years, and even when he became too infirm, by reason of old age, to kneel or stand, he would go through with his season of devotion sitting in his chair.

From the time of his receiving the renewing of the Holy Ghost, and uniting with the church of Christ, in 1801, to the day of his death, in 1847, the resolution of Joshua of old was not only firmly fixed in his mind, but faithfully acted out in his life :--*As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.*

## 2. *His attachment to the Bible.*

He was truly a Bible Christian. The Bible was his constant reading book. Its sacred contents were deeply fixed in his mind : engraven upon his heart. The great doctrines of Divine grace were clear to his understanding. He was a good theologian, and his theology was all drawn from the word of God. Not a doctrine expressed in the Westminster Catechism but was familiar to his mind, and yet he did not believe them merely because he found them there, but because they were in the Bible. In discussion he would sustain every point by reference to the Scriptures.

The fall of man ; the depravity of the human heart ; the nature and necessity of regeneration ; the Divine character of the Lord Jesus ; the atonement by the sufferings and death of Christ ; God's electing love ; salvation by grace ; the maintaining of good works as an evidence of regeneration ; the triumph of the church over all her foes in the latter days ; the resurrection of the dead, and the general judgment ; the everlasting happiness of the righteous, and the eternal punishment of the wicked, were subjects which he received from the word of God, and which he delighted to dwell upon, both in conversation and in exhortation.

All his proof and all his reasoning on these great and glorious doctrines, was, simply—*Thus saith the Lord.* He knew nothing of the philosophy of the schools, nor of the arguments of learned theologians. Yet in his advanced life, when his sons would sometimes state or read to him the views and reasonings of educated men on the great doctrines of Divine revelation, he would smile and say, "That is just

what I learned from the Bible many years ago." And he would seem much delighted to think that the sun-light of the Holy Scriptures had completely dispelled from his mind those mists and fogs which the long and laboured arguments of great men could scarcely do from the minds of others. He was a friend of education; but he wished to have all education founded upon God's eternal truths, and all human knowledge baptised with the spirit of the Gospel.

### 3. *His devotedness to the interests of the church.*

No worldly business would ever prevent his punctual attendance at the stated church meeting. He seemed always to act on the sentiment expressed in the 137th Psalm: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."

If any members of the church walked disorderly, he was always greatly distressed. They were made a constant subject of prayer in his family devotions and in his closet, and he could never rest satisfied till they were brought to repentance, and the reproach removed from the church. In his view, faithful discipline was of vital importance to the interests of the church; and that the temple of the Lord could never be reared up in beauty and glory by unfaithful or lukewarm members.

By the assistance of other brethren in the church, he maintained a conference meeting in his own neighbourhood every Sabbath evening. This meeting was conducted by the reading of the Scriptures, singing, exhortation, and prayer. This meeting has been held in that neighbourhood, with scarce an interruption, for about half a century. It being remote from the centre of the parish, the pastor of the church seldom attended these meetings. But they have always been conducted with decency and in order, and have greatly contributed to the peace and prosperity, to the morality and virtue, as well as to the salvation of many in that community. And they have never deterred any from going up to the house of God during the day. O no; the

lovers of the conference meeting have always loved the sanctuary. As oft as the holy Sabbath morning returns, nearly all the families of that neighbourhood may be seen wending their way in company up to the courts of the Lord, feeling or singing as they go,—

“ How *does* my heart rejoice to hear  
My friends devoutly say,  
In Zion let us *all* appear,  
And keep the solemn day.”

After listening to two sermons from their pastor, and attending a Sabbath school at intermission, they hasten in company to their homes, take refreshment, and then resort to their beloved conference meeting, to pray, and praise, and to exhort one another to remember the instructions of their pastor, and to be faithful in the service of their Divine Master. The lead of these meetings, for many years, devolved upon my father, Deacon Fisk.

A description of two in which he took a lively and active part, will serve to give a specimen of their character, and of the interesting scenes which they have sometimes exhibited.

On one Sabbath evening, in the fall of 1816, the people were convened in a large private house: one spacious room was filled to overflowing, and several smaller ones were also crowded. The Lord was there by the gracious influences of the Divine Spirit. It was a time of peculiar interest. The deacon on that evening was very pathetic and felicitous in his remarks. He had gone from his closet to the house of prayer, and the spirit of the Lord was upon him. A deep solemnity pervaded the whole congregation. The saints were enlivened, and sinners were convicted of sin.

Several of the older members of the church had spoken out the deep feelings of their hearts, and had given their exhortation to their brethren, and to the unconverted, when the question was asked: “Are there not some new witnesses to the truth in the house?” A young man, who had been hopefully converted in another parish, arose, and expressed his hope in Christ, and exhorted the young to engage with

him in the service of Christ. He sat down, and immediately another arose,—he who is now giving this relation,—and with a trembling tongue spoke of the love of Jesus, of his hope of pardon through the Saviour's atoning blood, of his love for the doctrines of Divine grace, which he had once hated, and of his great desire to see all his young companions turning unto the Lord, and rejoicing in his mercy. He also acknowledged that he had long been impressed with the importance of expressing the deep feelings of his heart, and of witnessing to the truth; he hoped that Christians would pardon this neglect, and make him a special subject of prayer, that God would blot out all his transgressions, and lead him in wisdom's ways. He sat down and hid his face, while the whole assembly was moved to tears. The Deacon's heart overflowed; he seemed melted all down.

It was what he had long been praying for, and yet he felt himself unworthy having his prayers answered in such a signal manner. He felt that heaven had come very near, and he seemed to bask continually in the sunshine of God's mercy. Earth and earthly things were of but trifling consequence then. He went home rejoicing in the Lord. He fed on heavenly manna day by day, and his wrestlings at the throne of grace, for the conversion of sinners, were not in vain. The revival went on, and many were added unto the Lord, and from time to time came forward to testify what the Lord had done for their souls.

The other scene to which I have alluded, was on this wise:—Some strangers from the opposite side of the mountain had come over, bringing a preacher with them, and had made an appointment for a meeting on Sabbath evening, at the very time and place of the conference meeting. The Deacon did not hear of this till the hour had nearly arrived. He fully believed that those persons held false doctrine and were the propagators of error, and that it was his duty to stand firm and defend the truth. He hastened to the place of meeting; found the strangers there, and the house filled with people.

Without remark, he began his meeting as usual. He offered prayer with great apparent humility, and much fervency. A hymn was sung. The third chapter of John's Gospel was read. For the topic of his address to the people, the Deacon chose the conversation of our Saviour with Nicodemus.

He began by speaking of the great danger of embracing error, of the vital importance of holding to the truth, and of the utter ruin that would come on all those who trusted to their own works. He then spoke of the depravity of the human heart ; of the absolute necessity of being born again ; of the nature and evidences of regeneration ; of the glories that awaited the regenerate in the world to come, and of the fearful consequences of being deceived. He then exhorted all present to give themselves no rest, till they had good evidence that they had received this great spiritual change.

His introduction was happy ; his arguments in support of the doctrine stated, were clear and forcible, all proof being drawn fresh from the word of God. As he proceeded, his feelings began to kindle, his tall frame stood erect, his countenance glowed with a peculiar brightness, and still exhibited marks of decision, of love and tender compassion. He drew his handkerchief through his hand much more rapidly than usual, and at length held it stretched out in one hand, while with the other he pointed the sinner in the way of life, and poured forth such a strain of pathetic eloquence, as moved and melted the whole assembly ! It was a noble exhibition of Christian eloquence : the eloquence of a heart deeply imbued with the love of truth, and conscious of contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. This was altogether above himself. His remarks were generally very concise, conspicuous, and forcible ; often only the plain statement of some Christian doctrine or duty, but never did he weary the congregation with a multitude of words without thought. But now his whole soul being stirred within him, his mouth was filled with arguments, and his tongue loosed in strains of eloquence. The meeting

closed, the strangers left, and were never seen there again. And indeed during the whole of fifty years the people of that neighbourhood have been very harmoniously united in one Christian denomination; and that conference meeting has been the great bond of union.

And the mercy of the Lord has ever rested upon that people, and his righteousness is descending to children's children, even to the third and fourth generation. No squallid poverty has ever been known there; no beastly intemperance, nor flagrant crimes, but many are found there who fear God and keep his commandments. Eternity only will reveal how much that people are indebted to that conference meeting, and to the prayers and godly example of Deacon Fisk, and his early associates in the service of Christ, all of whom now rest from their labours, but their works do follow them.

#### 4. *His Christian example.*

During the forty-six years that he was a member of the church, I do not know that he ever received the least censure for any misconduct. At home and abroad, in the intercourse of his family, and in dealing with his fellow men, the same Gospel principle regulated all his actions. He was an every day Christian. Yet he had his infirmities, and often mourned over his own imperfections. And while he pursued an uninterrupted Christian course before the world, he had many inward struggles with sin, and daily implored mercy and forgiveness through our Lord Jesus Christ. Yet his example was always salutary, and had a restraining influence upon his children and on others.

He was careful in his observance of the holy Sabbath, making it a day for the worship of God in the sanctuary, and for the special instruction of his children at home. When practicable, he always took his children with him to the house of God, but if any were necessarily left at home, they were charged to remember that it was the Lord's day; and very early was the impression deeply fixed in all their minds, that the Sabbath must be remembered and kept holy.

Yet they did sometimes forget. Once the writer, while his father was gone to meeting, wandered away upon the meadows on the holy Sabbath, and, enticed by other boys, went into the river to bathe. But no sooner had he plunged into the deep water, than the thought came like a flash—*I shall be drowned, and how will my father feel to have a son drowned on the Sabbath!* But God, in great merey, spared him; he reached the shore in safety: put on his clothes, and, without saying a word to the other boys, hastened away; but when he reached home he was afraid to go into the presence of his mother, so he turned aside into an old barn, and there lay trembling for hours in view of his awful guilt. And O, how he dreaded to see the face of his father that night, and for weeks he carried in his bosom the stings of a guilty conscience, and never after yielded to such a vile temptation.

The Deacon's godly life and conversation was a praise to them that do well, and a terror to evil doers. He was not always finding fault with the waywardness of others, but at suitable times he would administer reproof privately, and rebuke sin publicly. His reproofs were always given in a few words, and were very cutting. Said a young man once, "Save me from the rebukes of Deacon Fisk. He never speaks harshly, but always in love: still his words go through like a sharp knife!"

In giving advice to his children on any important occasions, his words were always very few, but never failed to make an impression upon the heart, like the point of a diamond.

One of his youngest sons was about to leave home at the age of 14. His father accompanied him to his place of destination, and instead of giving him any long lectures about his conduct, simply said to him before they parted: "My son, you are now going to dwell in a wicked place among strangers. Two things let me enjoin upon you,—*Never use profane language, and remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.*" This was spoken with a tearful eye and a quivering lip. It stuck fast in the heart of the youth. It held him back from sin, and guided his footsteps in the paths of wis-

dom. And though he never again had the privilege of dwelling beneath the paternal roof, only on occasional visits, he has often acknowledged, since he became a man, and a prominent member in the church of Christ, that that short counsel of his father has ever been a sort of beacon light to guide him thus far in a right course through life's tempestuous sea.

##### 5. *His temperance principles.*

In the early stages of the Temperance Reformation, he took a decided stand. Like many others, indeed like every body in that day, he had in his early life imbibed the foolish notion that a little stimulation from ardent spirits was useful to health. He was subject to ill turns, and really thought that a small potation of spirits afforded him relief. He never made a daily use of the poison: never drank to excess, only a little occasionally when he felt unwell. But after the Temperance Reformation began, he soon had his eyes opened to see the influence of his example. And he said to himself—Can I not practice self-denial for the good of others? Shall I, a Deacon of the church, lay a stumbling block before the intemperate? What if I do suffer; let me suffer rather than set an evil example, and an offence, and an occasion of stumbling to any human being. He verily thought that he was practising great self-denial, and making a great sacrifice; but to his astonishment he found afterwards that his sacrifice was for his own good: that his turns of illness were less frequent and less severe than while he used strong drink for a remedy. Thus, in his old age, he set a noble example of total abstinence from the use of all intoxicating liquors.

But again, he had long witnessed and mourned over the barbarous custom of *treating* at raisings. He had beheld sad accidents occasioned by the use of rum: church members, too, much excited, neighbours set to quarrelling, limbs broken, and even lives lost! He had reasoned with others on the subject, but no man could be found of sufficient moral



courage to undertake the raising of a building without the usual pernicious aid.

At length he had himself a heavy barn to raise, and his course of action had long been fixed in his own mind; his determination was to have that building go up without the aid of alcohol.

Hands were invited, and as the information was busily circulated that the Deacon was going to raise his barn without liquor, nearly all the drinking men in the community were early on the spot, with a full determination to defeat the object. A great bustle was made among the timber, but nothing accomplished. Ten men would tug upon a mere rafter, and not be able to lift it! Finally the master workman, who loved a drop of the creature himself, declared that the frame could not go up, and offered to obtain liquor at his own expense, provided the Deacon would only give his consent. But he was not the man to be foiled in this way. He had seen too many of the enemy's tricks to be taken in such a snare. He stood upon a piece of timber and addressed his neighbours briefly. He told them that it was not the expense at which he was looking, for he had been to far greater expense in providing for them a good supper; but it was the principle—the evil effects of rum-drinking at raisings, the example which he felt it to be his duty to set before the world. He then appealed to the honour of the young men, and called upon them to sustain him in his noble undertaking. He then declared that if that barn could not be raised without the assistance of alcohol, every stick of timber should lie and rot upon the ground! His very look showed the determination of his heart, and his arguments, though brief, were convincing. The young men caught the spirit which he breathed, it nerved them to action. The frame went up without rum, accident, or delay!

Thus, a noble example was set, which, during the twenty years that have since elapsed, has been followed by many others, to the peace and quietness, to the good order and

high honour of the sober and industrious inhabitants of that community.

6. *His trust in God, and habits of special prayer.*

He seemed to feel his dependence on God for all things, temporal as well as spiritual; and he was remarkable for going to the throne of grace with all matters of special interest. Every thing that concerned his own or his children's welfare, was spread out with child-like simplicity before his heavenly Father.

In times of distressing sickness, or of threatening famine, none could hear him pray in his family without feeling that the broad wing of heaven was spread out over his household for protection.

In one year of great scarcity, his grain was all exhausted many weeks before harvest; the last dollar of money was spent; and a large family was looking up to him for bread. What could he do but look up to his heavenly Father? To Him he did look in most earnest prayer on the morning that his last morsel of bread was consumed. And he looked with confidence, and did not look in vain. Scarcity was his prayer finished before a gentleman of wealth from another town passed along, and gave the praying man money sufficient to furnish grain for his family till harvest. My father always felt that it came from heaven in answer to prayer; and he praised the Lord for it. *Trust in the Lord, and verily thou shalt be fed.*

7. *His peculiar seasons of wrestling prayer for the conversion of his children.*

The truth was deeply fixed upon his heart, that his children could not be saved without regeneration. In all his instructions to them, and in all his prayers for them, one thought always seemed prominent before his mind,—*Ye must be born again.* And yet he even appeared to have the strongest confidence that the Holy Spirit would eventually work a saving change in the minds of all his children. Nevertheless, he knew that Jehovah waited to be enquired of by their believing parents to do it for them. And there

were seasons when the Spirit seemed to indite his petitions for the conversion of some one child. He would travail in birth for that one, appear sometimes almost in an agony, and rest not till that child was born into the kingdom of Christ. The relation of one or two instances, I think, cannot fail to be both interesting and profitable.

My brother Harvey went out from his father's house, in early youth, to learn the trade of a printer. As he has many years since finished his course on earth, I shall speak with the greater freedom of his history here ; and the history of the son will tend greatly to show the character of the father. His father took pains to put him under the charge of pious good men, yet, by the youth of the village with whom he associated, he was exposed to many temptations. Much evil example was set before him, and being naturally of a warm temperament, and exceedingly fond of sport, he was not slow to learn many of their vicious habits, and to run with them to a great excess of riot. Once when he returned home on his yearly visit, his whole heart and life seemed prone to evil. Almost the whole neighbourhood was excited by his profane wit, nonsense, and funny mischief. And while others laughed and chuckled at the wild boy, his father was deeply oppressed in spirit. He clearly saw that if this son should pursue the same wild course much longer, he would become reckless to all good, and by his vicious habits would bring great dishonour upon the covenant of his father's God. Immediately he gave himself to most earnest prayer. In his family devotions, that child, in his wayward course, seemed ever to stand before him ; and he pled for his conversion as one deeply concerned for the honour and glory of God. And while the father was thus earnestly praying, let us turn to the son, and see the wonderful way in which the Lord was leading him. He had then returned to his business, and was about 17 years of age. This was in the month of June, 1816.

He had become exceedingly fond of parties of pleasure, which, among the youth of the village of M——, were

very frequent, and were tending to dissipation and to the ruin of many a fair character. In July a large party was contrived; but in making their arrangements, he thought that he did not have that honourable station assigned him which his standing in society merited. He was exceeding angry, and resolved at once that he would not attend the party. The hand of the Lord was in the thing, for his father was praying for him, though he knew it not. And his resolution thus rashly made, no companion could persuade him to retract. The day arrived—it was a holiday. Young F., sick of the world, and vexed with every body, strayed off from the village alone, and entered the thiek forest. After proceeding a mile or two without earing whither he went, he came upon the banks of a warbling stream. He lay down to muse, while hatred was rankling in his bosom towards the young men whom he thought had slighted him. After lying there some hours, watching the bubbling stream, whose waters were perpetually gliding along, his feelings became wonderfully soothed, and a new train of thought sprung up in his mind. His father was praying for him. And he talked thus to himself: “So passes human life! like these swift gliding waters, my days are swiftly gliding away! Why should I spend them all in vanity? Why be so vexed with my young companions? They are wasting their time and their money, and are contracting vicious habits. I will envy them no more, and will never join their sports again! I will take the money I should have spent at the party to-day, and will buy me a useful book. And whenever the young people have a party again, I will take as much money as I should spend by attending, and will buy me another book, and thus I will improve my mind, and qualify myself to do some good in the world.”

After this soliloquy, he arose, and with a light heart traced his way back to the village; he bought his book, and entered his office to read. And there he sat till still night came on, and the full moon in a clear sky was scattering abroad her silvery light. As he gazed upon her lovely face,

serious reflections rose in his mind, though as yet he had no deep conviction of sin. The converse of his thoughts was changed, and feelings pensive and sad came over his soul. It may be that he repeated then his favourite lines :—

The queen of night is sailing high,  
A pale bark on the azure sky ;  
And not a breath is heard to sigh,  
So deep the soft tranquillity.  
The breeze of night has sunk to rest  
Upon the river's tranquil breast,  
And every bird has sought her nest,  
Where silent is her minstrelsy.

There is an hour of deep repose  
That yet upon my heart shall close,  
When all that nature dreads and knows  
Shall burst upon me wondrously !  
O may I then awake forever  
My harp to rapture's high endeavour,  
And as from life's vain scenes I sever,  
Be lost in immortality !

But why these sedate and solemn reflections? Why such a change produced in the feelings and habits of that youth in a single day? The answer is easily given. His father, who had entered into covenant with God in his behalf, and who was deeply distressed for that covenant, in case he would be dishonoured by this his wayward son, was pleading with God that he would vindicate his own honour, by arresting that youth in his wild career of vanity, and turning his feet into the paths of wisdom.

And the Lord's unseen hand was stretched out to guide him in a way that he knew not. The resolution to purchase books and read, he most scrupulously kept, and when he was twenty-one, he found that his mind was not only stored with a valuable fund of knowledge, but that his library, which he had purchased with his pocket money, was worth about one hundred dollars !

Soon after he began his course of reading, he was induced to join a Bible class, which the pastor of the church had opened for young people. Thus to his reading was added the study of the holy Scriptures. How plain the hand of his father's God ! Still the mind of the young man was

dark, his heart hard, and his will stubborn; and he felt a great aversion to spiritual things, especially to the distinguishing doctrines of Divine grace, which he had been taught in his childhood. His godly father was yet to pour out many more tears, and groans, and wrestling prayers.

At this period the father knew nothing of the feelings of the son; and the son knew nothing concerning those of the father. Being some miles apart, no communication passed between them for several months. The father seldom or never committed his thoughts to writing, and the son at this period withheld his letters from home! But the father's spirit of prayer in behalf of that son increased, till in the month of October it rose to an agony. For four months the conversion of that one child had been a special object of prayer, and he began to feel that the blessing was long delayed. But he did not then know how God was leading the child along, and preparing his mind to receive the truths of the Gospel in the love thereof. For nearly one whole week my father seemed to forget entirely every other object. In his family worship, his whole prayer was offered up in strong cries for the conversion of that one son. Time after time such was the fact. At length his feelings became calm and seemed to rejoice in the fulfilment of the promises of his covenant-keeping God. Soon after this, a letter was received from the absent son, from whom nothing had been heard for some time. It was a letter which filled all our hearts with joy and gladness. Our father said but little, but looked as though the language of his heart was—*It is nothing more than what I expected.* And he thanked the Lord for the unspeakable blessing, that he had vindicated the honour of his own covenant promises in the conversion of that child. My brother informed us that for some months his mind had been deeply impressed on the subject of religion; that he had felt his heart rise in opposition to the doctrines of grace, and to God's plan of salvation, but had found at length that it was hard to contend with his Maker, and to set up his own will against the will of God. He had felt his lost con-

dition as a sinner, his condemnation by the law of God, and his utter ruin without a Saviour. But now he hoped that his sins were all forgiven, and that he had become reconciled to God through Jesus Christ; stated that his heart greatly rejoiced in the Lord, and that he longed to see the whole world praising God for his goodness. Thus ran the account of his experience; and from that time he became sincerely and ardently devoted to the cause of Christ, and ran to do his Master's service till he bid him put his armour off and rest in heaven.

As his father's prayers were the main spring to all his exertions in the cause of his Redeemer, and to all the good he accomplished during the fourteen years of his devoted Christian life, it may not be improper to give some further brief outlines of his history in this connection.

No sooner had he begun to breathe the vital air of the kingdom of heaven, than he strove most earnestly to enlist all his friends under the banner of King Jesus. All his natural vivacity, and all his active powers of mind were now consecrated to Christ, and he was ever on the alert to win some new soul to Christ. As he was one of the first converts in a glorious revival that continued some months, eternity alone will reveal how much his ardent prayers, his earnest exhortations, and his faithful conversation contributed as a means to the furtherance of that work of Divine grace.

After finishing his apprenticeship to the printing business, he repaired to the city of New York, where he soon found many Christian friends who encouraged him to study for the ministry. Subsequently he was assisted by the first Presbyterian Church, Rochester, N. Y., in his academic and collegiate studies; and he graduated at Hamilton College, in the summer of 1826.

Previous to this he had become very zealous in the cause of Sabbath schools, and did much to promote their interest wherever he went. Sabbath schools was the theme of his conversation, the most prominent subject of his epistles, and one great object in his prayers. In the fall, after graduating,

he entered the Theological Seminary at Princeton, N. J. Here all his leisure moments were devoted to his favourite object. He published a series of Sabbath school questions, and issued, monthly, a small Sabbath school Journal. Eventually he was licensed to preach, and was appointed agent for the cause of Sabbath schools in New Jersey. He went through the length and breadth of the State, stirring up the minds of parents and children to the great importance of the subject; and organizing and reorganizing Sabbath schools in all quarters.

His last great act in the cause, was the compilation of several of the first volumes of the "Union Questions," published by the *American Sunday School Union*. Thus, returning to the father, we may see that an illiterate Christian man, dwelling in an obscure valley of the green mountains, exerted an influence by his prayers and parental instruction, which will be felt on thousands of young minds from generation to generation, so long as the American Sunday School Union shall hold its present noble stand in the world.

But my brother made haste to do his Master's work, and soon finished his course, resting from his labours at the early age of thirty-two. He died in New York, March, 1831. His ruling passion was strong in death. When his tongue was partly palsied, so that he could scarcely articulate, he continued to preach Christ to all who entered his room. And his conversation then was the means of several hopeful conversions. The last thing for which he asked was the Bible. He took it, pressed it to his bosom, and said:—

"Holy Bible, book Divine,  
Precious treasure, thou art mine;  
Mine, to teach me what I am;  
Mine, to show a Saviour's name;  
Mine, ———"

His work was done: his last testimony to the preciousness of the Bible was given. His redeemed spirit took its flight to worlds above, where recently, we trust, it has welcomed



the spirit of that beloved father, in answer to whose prayers he was brought into the kingdom of Christ.

But to return to the particular history of my father.

Another of his sons had grown to years of manhood ; had become engaged in active worldly business, and was himself at the head of a family, and still unconverted ! This grieved the old gentleman's heart exceedingly, and chiefly, because he could not get a real wrestling spirit of prayer in his behalf. At length the father got hold of the throne of grace for that son, and he ceased not to wrestle and agonize, till his soul became calm, and his trust unwavering in the promise of God. Then the blessing came ; a letter was received from that absent son, from whom nothing had been heard for several months, bringing the joyful news of his hopeful conversion to God.

It was no more than what his father expected to hear, but the blessing made his heart overflow with praise and thanksgiving to his covenant-keeping God. In somewhat of a similar manner did he pray for the regeneration of each of his children individually, until all were hopefully born again, and had become members of the church of Christ by their own profession. Three of his sons, and one son-in-law have been called to the work of the holy ministry ; two of whom have finished their course and have entered into rest, and two still remain.

At the time of his death, of children and children-in-law, he had 19 ; grand-children, 30, and several great-grand-children. Twelve children and grand-children had departed this life before him. One daughter, the late wife of the Rev. P. Bailey, Berkshire, Vermont, an eminent Christian woman, rested from her labours soon after her father, and has gone, we trust, to join with him in the song of redeeming love on high.

For several years towards the close of his life, he endured many infirmities, and his mind in some measure became enfeebled with his body, yet hope remained strong in the Lord. To the last he had a great concern for the cause, and

nothing seemed to give him greater pleasure than to have his children usefully employed in building up the kingdom of the Redeemer.

To a company of his children who had met for a visit in his room the year before his death, he spoke with a faltering tongue : " I can't say much, but I hope that you will all be faithful in your callings, and do all you can to promote the cause of Christ." He said no more, it was enough. It was our honoured father's last advice,—a peculiar characteristic of the man,—brief and full of meaning. He felt more anxious to have his children usefully employed in promoting the cause of Christ, than to have them abound in the riches and honours of this world.

One child said to him, " I hope, father, that your faith is still strong in the Lord Jesus Christ." His laconic answer, with an expression of countenance which cannot be described, was, " O yes,—what could I do without Him?" Sure enough, what could he at the age of four score and upwards, do without Christ? What can any of us do without Him? Christ is all and in all to the believer.

Well, my father has gone beyond the bounds of time, and he now knows the infinite value of Christ for a friend. He departed this life, without a struggle or a groan, February 5, 1847. Christ is now to him all in all.

While on earth he often felt and expressed, as sang by the poet :—

" Ere since by faith I knew the streams,  
Thy flowing wounds supply,  
Redeeming love has been my theme,  
And shall be till I die.  
There is a nobler, sweeter song,  
I'll sing thy power to save,  
When this poor lisping, stam'ring tongue  
Lies silent in the grave!"

His tongue now lies silent in the grave, but his redeemed spirit has begun that sweeter, nobler song in heaven. No more will he feel the infirmities of age ; no more groan in the flesh being burdened.

But the stream of mercy and of righteousness which has

flowed down from the throne above, through his prayers, and faith, and godly life, to his children, and already to his children's children, will never cease to flow till time shall end, unless his posterity basely depart from Christian example, and cease to take hold of God's covenant and to remember his commandments to do them, which, may heaven forbid.

O, how delightful the contemplation of a whole family in heaven! Together they walk the golden streets of the new Jerusalem; together drink of the river of the water of life; and together sing the praises of God and the Lamb! And not these alone, but others, saved through their instrumentality.

O think of those Christian parents who have faithfully trained up a large family of children to serve God on earth. Think of those children occupying important stations in the church of Christ; of being the means of turning many to righteousness; of winning souls to Christ. O, then, think what a vast multitude in the resurrection morning will follow those two pious parents up to the right hand, and from thence up to the mansions of glory, saved in consequence of their taking hold of God's covenant, and of their training up their whole household to fear God and keep his commandments! O, who would not wish for the place of such parents, when the things of this world shall have passed away!

O ye parents, who listen to these words, remember that your work on earth will soon be finished! What you do for your children must be done quickly. Have you taken hold of God's covenant? Are you showing your faith in that covenant, by remembering his commandments to do them? Are you training up your children for usefulness on earth, and for happiness in heaven? Do you feel that they *must be born again*, or never see the kingdom of God? Do you make their conversion a subject of daily earnest prayer? Do you set a godly example before them? Are you leading them in the ways of wisdom and holiness? Should they follow on in the way you are now going, would they ever

reach heaven? O reflect upon the solemn responsibility that is now devolving upon you as parents. The right training of the next generation devolves on you. The character of the next set of fathers and mothers will, in a great measure, be according to your moulding. Yea, the men who will soon occupy the pulpits of the land, or go forth as missionaries of the cross to the ends of the earth; who will plead at the bar of justice, or fill our halls of Legislation and occupy the seats of Parliament, or wield the destinies of nations, are now under the training of the parents of this generation!

O, then, what a momentous responsibility rests upon you! And, most of all, because your children have immortal souls, and their bliss or wo in the eternal world, depends greatly upon your faith, and prayers, and godly or ungodly life! O, think how soon your last instruction will be given—your last prayer offered up—your work on earth finished! Make haste, then, and do your whole duty to your children every day, and remember that God has said:—*The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him; and his righteousness to children's children to such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.* Amen.

