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A BLAST OF THE TRUMPET AGAINST FALSE PEACE.

BY REV. C. H. SPURGEON, LONDON.

"Peace, peace, when there is no peace."—Jer. vi, 14.

Ministers are fearfully guilty if they intentionally build up men in a false peace. I cannot imagine any man more greatly guilty of blood than he who plays jackal to the lion of hell, by pandering to the depraved tastes of vain, rebellious man. The physician who should pamper a man in his disease, who should feed his cancer, or inject continual poison into the system, while at the same time he promised sound health and long life—such a physician would not be one half so hideous a monster of cruelty as the professed minister of Christ who should bid his people take comfort, when, instead thereof, he ought to be crying, "Woe unto them that are at ease in Zion: be troubled, ye careless ones." The work of the ministry is no child's play; it is a labour which might fill an angel's hands—did fill the Saviour's heart. Much prayer we need that we may be kept honest, and much grace that we may not mislead the souls whom we are bound to guide. The pilot who should pretend to steer a ship toward its proper haven, but who should meanwhile occupy himself below with boring holes in her keel that she might sink, would not be a worse traitor than the man who takes the helm of a church, and professes to be steering it towards Christ, while all the while he is ruining it by diluting the truth as it is in Jesus, concealing unpalatable truths, and lulling men into security with soft and flattering words. We might sooner pardon the assassin who stretches forth his hand under the guise of friendship, and then stabs us to the heart, than we could forgive the man who comes towards us with smooth words, telling us that he is God's ambassador, but all the while fomenting rebellion in our hearts, and pacifies us while we are living in revolt against the majesty of heaven. In the great day when Jehovah shall launch his thunderbolts, methinks he will reserve one more dread and terrible than the rest, for some traitor to the cross of Christ, who has

not only destroyed himself, but led others into hell.

The motive with these false prophets is an abominable one. Jeremiah tells us it was an evil covetousness. They preached smooth things because the people would have it so; because they thus brought grist to their own mill, and glory to their own names. Their design was abominable, and without doubt, their end shall be desperate—cast away with the refuse of mankind. These who professed to be the precious sons of God, comparable to fine gold, shall be esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter.

But, my dear hearers, it is a lamentable fact, that without any hireling-shepherd to cry, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace," men will cry that for themselves. They need not the syren song to entice them to the rocks of presumption and rash confidence. There is a tendency in their own hearts to put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter—to think well of their evil estate and foster themselves in proud conceit. No man is ever too severe with himself. We hold the scales of justice with a very unsteady hand when our character is in the balance. We are too ready to say, "I am rich and increased in goods," when at the same time we are naked, and poor, and miserable. Let men alone, let no deluder seek to deceive them, hush for ever every false and tempting voice, they will themselves, impelled by their own pride, run to an evil conceit, and make themselves at ease, though God himself is in arms against them.

My solemn business this morning shall be, and O may God help me in it, to drag forth to the light some of you who have been pacifying your own consciences, and have been crying, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace."

It is no uncommon thing with me to meet with people who say, "Well, I am happy enough. My conscience never troubles me. I believe if I were to die I should go

to heaven as well as anybody else." I know that those men are living in the commission of glaring acts of sin, and I am sure they could not prove their innocence even before the bar of man; yet will these men look you in the face and tell you that they are not at all disturbed at the prospect of dying. They laugh at death as though it were but a scene in a comedy, and joke at the grave as if they could leap in and out of it at pleasure. Well, gentlemen, I will take you at your word, though I don't believe you. I will suppose you have this peace, and I will endeavour to account for it on certain grounds which may render it somewhat more difficult for you to remain in it. I do pray that God the Holy Spirit may destroy these foundations, and pull up these bulwarks of yours, and make you feel uneasy in your consciences and troubled in your minds; for un-ease is the road to ease, and disquiet in the soul is the road to the true quiet. To be tormented on account of sin is the path to peace, and happy shall I be if I can hurl a fire-brand into your hearts this morning; if I shall be able, like Samson, to turn at least some little foxes loose into the standing corn of your conceit and set your heart in a blaze.

1. The first person I shall have to deal with this morning, is the man who has peace because he spends his life in a ceaseless round of gaiety and frivolity. You have scarcely come from one place of amusement before you enter another. You are always planning some excursion, and dividing the day between one entertainment and another. Yet know that you are never happy except you are in what you call gay society, where the frivolous conversation will prevent you from hearing the voice of your conscience. In the morning you will be asleep while God's sun is shining, but at night you will be spending precious time in some place of foolish, if not lascivious mirth. Like Saul, the deserted king, you have an unquiet spirit and therefore you call for music, and it hath its charms, doubtless, charms not only to soothe the stubborn breast, but to still a stubborn conscience for awhile, but while its notes are carrying you upwards towards heaven, in some grand composition of a master author, I beseech you never to forget that your sins are carrying you down to hell. If the harp should fail you, then you call for Nabal's feast.

There shall be a sheep shearing, and you shall be drunken with wine, until your souls become as stolid as a stone. And then you wonder that you have peace. What wonder! Surely any man would have peace when his heart has become as hard as a stone. What weathers shall it feel? What tempests shall move the stubborn bowels of a granite rock? You sear your consciences, and then marvel that they feel not. Perhaps too, when both wine and the viol fail you, you will call for the dances and the daughter of Herodias shall please Herod, even though John the Baptist's head should pay its deadly price. Well, well, if you go from one of these scenes to another, I am at no loss to solve the riddle that there should be with you, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace."

And now sit for your portraits, and I will paint you to life. A company of idolaters are gathered together around an hideous image. There sits the blood-delighted Moloch. He is heated hot. The fire blazes in his brazen centre, and a child is about to be put into his arms to be burnt to ashes. The mother and father are present when the offspring of their own loins is to be immolated. The little one shrieks with terror; its little body begins to consume in this desperate heat. Will not the parents hear the cry of their own flesh, and listen to the wailings of the fruit of their own bowels? Ah, no, the priests of Moloch will prevent the appeal of nature! Sounding their drums and blowing their trumpets with all their might they drown the cries of this poor immolated victim. It is what you are doing! Your soul is the victim to Satan! It is being destroyed now; and if you would but listen to its cries, if you would give yourself a little quiet, you might hear your poor soul shrieking: "*Oh! do not destroy me: put not away from me the hope of mercy; damn me not; send me not down to hell.*" These are shrieks that might penetrate your spirit, and startle you into wisdom. But no, you beat your drums, and sound your trumpets, and you have your dance and your merriment, that the noise of your poor soul may be hushed. Ah, sirs! there will be a day when you will have to hear your spirit speak. When your cups are empty, and not a drop of water can be given to your burning tongue — when your music has ceased, and the

doleful "Miserere" of wailing souls shall be your Black Sanctus,—when you shall be launched for ever into a place where merriment and mirth are strangers—then you will hear the cries of your soul, but hear too late. Then shall each voice be as a dagger sticking in your souls. When your conscience shall cry, "Remember, thou hadst thy day of mercy; thou hadst thy day of the proclamation of the gospel, but thou didst reject it," then thou wilt wish, but wish in vain, for thunders to come and drown that still small voice, which shall be more terrible in thy ears than even the rumbling of the earthquake or the fury of the storm. Oh that ye would be wise and not fritter away your souls for gaiety. Poor sirs, poor sirs! There are nobler things for souls to do than to kill time—a soul immortal spending all its powers on these frivolities. Well might Young say of it, it resembles ocean into tempest tossed, to waft a feather or to drown a fly. These things are beneath you; they do no honour to you. O that you would begin to live! What a price you are paying for your mirth—eternal torment for an hour of jollity—separation from God for a brief day or two of sin! Be wise, men, I beseech you; open your eyes and look about you. Be not for ever madmen. Dance not for ever on this precipice, but stop and think. O Spirit of the living God! stay thou the frivolous, and dart a burning thought into his soul that will not let him rest until he has tasted the solid joy, the lasting pleasure which none but Zion's children know.

2. Well, now I turn to another class of men. Finding that amusement at last has lost all its zest, having drained the cup of worldly pleasure till they find first satiety, and then disgust lying at the bottom, they want some stronger stimulus, and Satan who has drugged them once, has stronger opiates than mere merriment for the man who chooses to use them. If the frivolity of this world will not suffice to rock a soul to sleep, he hath a yet more hellish cradle for the soul. He will take you up to his own breast, and bid you suck therefrom his own devilish and Satanic nature, that you may then be still and calm. I mean that he will lead you to imbibe infidel notions, and when this is fully accomplished, you can have "Peace, peace, when there is no peace." When I hear a man saying,

"Well, I am peaceful enough, because I am not fool enough to believe in the existence of a God, or in a world to come; I cannot imagine that this old story book of yours—this Bible—is true." I feel two thoughts within my soul, first, a disgust of the man for his dishonesty, and secondly, a pity for the sad disquietude that needs such dishonesty to cover it. Do not suspect the man of being honest. There are two sorts of infidels; one sort are such fools that they know they never could distinguish themselves by anything that was right, so they try and get a little fictitious glory by pretending to believe and defend a lie. There are another set of men who are unquiet in their consciences; they do not like the Bible because it does not like them; it will not let them be comfortable in their sins, it is such an uneasy book to them; they did put their heads upon it once, but it was like a pillow stuffed with thorns, so they have done with it, and they would be very glad if they could actually prove it to be untrue, which they know they cannot. I say then, I at once despise his falsehood, and pity the uneasiness of his conscience that could drive him to such a paltry shift as this, to cover his terrors from the eyes of others. The more the man brags, the more I feel he does not mean it; the louder he is in his blasphemies, the more he curses, the better he argues, the more sure I am that he is not sincere, except in his desire to stifle the groans of his uneasy spirit. Ah, you remind me with your fine arguments, of the Chinese soldiery. When they go out to battle, they carry on their arm a shield with hideous monsters depicted upon it, and making the loudest noise they can, they imagine their opponents will run away instantly, alarmed by these amazing manifestations. And, so you arm yourself with blasphemies, and come out to attack God's ministers, and think we will run away because of your sophistries. No, we smile upon them contemptuously. Once, we are told, the Chinese hung across their harbour, when the English were coming to attack them, a string of tigers' heads. They said: "These barbarians will never dare to pass ferocious heads." So do these men hang a string of old, worn-out blasphemies and impieties, and then they imagine that conscience will not be able to attack them, and that God himself will let them live at peace.

Ab, sir, you shall find the red-hot bullets of divine justice too many and too terrible for your sophisms. When you shall fall under the arm of the Eternal God, vain will be your logic then. Dashed to shivers, you will believe in the omnipotence, when you are made to feel it, you will know his justice when it is too late to escape from its terror. Oh, be wise, cast away these day dreams. Cease to shut thy soul out of heaven; be wise, turn thee unto God whom thou hast abused. For "All manner of sin and blasphemy, shall be forgiven unto men." He is ready to forgive you, ready to receive you, and Christ is ready to wash your blasphemy away. Now, to-day, if grace enable you, you may be an accepted child of that God whom you have hated, and pressed to the bosom of that Jehovah whose very existence you have dared to deny. God bless these words to you: if they have seemed hard, they were only meant to come home to your conscience; an affectionate heart has led me to utter them. Oh, do not this evil thing. Suck not in these infidel notions; destroy not your soul, for the sake of seeming to be wise; stop not the voice of your conscience by those arguments which you know in your inmost soul are not true, which you only repeat in order to keep up a semblance of consistency.

3. I shall come now to a third class of men. These are people not particularly addicted to gaiety, nor especially given to infidel notions; but they are a sort of folk who are careless, and determined to let well alone. Their motto is, "Let to-morrow take care for the things of itself; let us live while we live; let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." If their conscience cries out at all, they bid it lie still. When the minister disturbs them, instead of listening to what he says, and so being brought into a state of real peace, they cry, "Hush! be quiet! there is time enough yet; I will not disturb myself with those childish fears: be still, sir, and lie down." Ah! and you have been doing this for years, have you? Whenever you have heard an earnest powerful sermon, you have gone home and laboured to get rid of it. A tear has stolen down your cheek now and then, and you have despised yourself for it. "Oh!" you say, "It is not manly for me to think of these things." There have been a few twitches at times which you could not help,

but the moment after you have your heart like a flint, impenetrably hard and stony. Well sir, I will give you a picture of yourself. There is a foolish farmer yonder in his house. It is the dead of night: the burglars are breaking in—men who will neither spare his life nor his treasure. There is a dog down below chained in the yard; it barks and barks, and howls again, "I can not be quiet," says the farmer my dog makes too much noise." Another howl, and yet another yell. He creeps out of bed, gets his loaded gun, opens the window, fires it, and kills the dog. "Ah! it is all right now," he mutters; he goes to bed, lies down, and quietly rests. "No hurt will come," he says, "now; for I have made that dog quiet. Ah! but would that he could have listened to the warning of the faithful creature. Ere long he shall feel the knife, and rue his fatal folly. So you, when God is warning you—when your faithful conscience is doing its best to save you—you try to kill your only friend, while Satan and Sin are stealing up to the bedside of your slothfulness, and are ready to destroy your soul for ever and ever. What should we think of the sailor at sea who should seek to kill all the stormy petrels, that there might be an end to all storms? Would you not say, "Poor foolish man! why those birds are sent by a kind providence to warn him of the tempest. Why needs he injure them? They cause not the tumult; it is the raging sea." So it is not your conscience that is guilty of the disturbance in your heart, it is your sin; and your conscience, acting true to its character, as God's index in your soul, tells you that all is wrong. Would that ye would arise, and take the warning, and fly to Jesus while the hour of mercy lasts.

To use another picture. A man sees his enemy before him. By the light of his candle he marks his insidious approach. His enemy looks fierce and black upon him, and is seeking his life. The man puts out the candle, and then exclaims, "I am now quite at peace." This is what you do. Conscience is the candle of the Lord; it shows you your enemy; you try to put it out by saying, "Peace, peace." Put the enemy out sir! put the enemy out! God give you grace to thrust sin out! O may the Holy Spirit enable you to thrust your lusts out of doors! Then let the candle burn; and the more brightly its light shall

shine, the better for your soul, now and hereafter. Oh! up ye sleepers, ye gagers of conscience, what mean you? Why are you sleeping when death is hastening on, when eternity is near, when the great white throne is even now coming on the clouds of heaven, when the trumpet of the resurrection is now being set to the mouth of the archangel—why do ye sleep? why will ye slumber! Oh that the voice of Jehovah might speak and make ye wake, that ye may escape from the wrath to come!

(To be continued.)

LIFE'S QUESTION.

BY THE DEAN OF CANTERBURY.

Drifting away,
Like mote on the stream,
To-day's disappointment
Yesterday's dream;
Ever revolving—
Never to mend—
Such is our progress;
Where is the end?

Whirling away
Like leaf in the wind;
Point of attachment
Left daily behind;
Fixed to no principle,
Fast to no friend—
Such our fidelity;
Where is the end?

Floating away,
Like cloud on the hill,
Pendulous tremulous,
Migrating still;
Where to repose ourselves?
Whither to tend?
Such our consistency;
Where is the end?

Crystal the pavement,
Seen through the stream;
Firm the reality
Under the dream.
We may not feel it,
Still we may mend—
How we have conquered
Not known till the end.

Bright leaves may scatter,
Sports of the wind;
But stand to the winter
The great tree behind,
Frost shall not wither it;
Storms cannot bend;
Roots firmly clasping
The Rock at the end.

Calm is the firmament
Over the cloud;
Clear shines the stars through
The rifts of the shroud.
There our repose shall be;
Thither we tend—
Spite of our wavering,
Approved at the end.

A LIFE PROBLEM.

All Christians know how difficult it is to keep a proper restraint upon their thoughts. When we most earnestly desire to be free from those that are impure or unholy, even then our minds are led far away by the very effort we make to drive these thoughts from us. Everywhere we are thus troubled; in the church on the Sabbath; in our business, and by the way-side, in the week. The adversary is never at rest; and how we can best avoid his assaults, is a life problem for every true disciple of our Master. The barnacles on the sea-shore throw out their beautiful fingers to catch the passing food, and we sit and wonder at them. Pass your hand between them and the sun, so that the shadow will fall upon them, and how quickly the tender animal withdraws into its shell, and is protected from all danger! So, when but the shadow of a temptation falls upon us, must we seek refuge in flight. We cannot stop to inquire whether there is really danger or not. The barnacle is only safe when it is shut up within its hard covering, and we are only safe when we have shut out the temptation from us. Satan is a skilful logician, and if we allow ourselves to reason with him, will quickly persuade us to choose the wrong. But whither shall we flee, and how shall we shut ourselves from evil thoughts?

When we were boys in England, we often, after school-hours, during the warm months, walked with our teacher over the lawns, and through the tangle, and listened, while he drew sermons from stones, insects, and plants, and taught us from them lessons of wisdom, of confidence in God, and of hope in an immortality. Once, when we were talking of the difficulties of keeping our minds pure, and of our proneness to yield to the temptation of wicked thoughts, he drew his drinking cup from his pocket, and said, "Children, this cup is full of air; how can I drive it out?" No one was able to answer. "Some people," continued he, "try to blow it out. Ah, many boys have lost their souls trying to get it out in that way. Now, see how easily it can be done;" and he stooped to the brook running at his feet, and filled the cup to the brim with the clear, sparkling water. "The air is all out now. Children, that leathern cup repre-

sents our hearts. The air which fills and surrounds it is sin, and the water in it is a pure thought from the fountain of life. Never forget that the only way to successfully resist temptation, is to instantly fill your heart with something pure and holy; then only will you be safe."

So the old man taught us, one by one, lessons of truth and love, which should never fade away from our memories. Cannot we, who have passed the years of tutelage, yet find some words of encouragement from the teachings of one who has long since gone to his rest?—*Presbyterian.*

SATAN FOILED.

Satan will do his utmost to flatter or fright you out of your purposes. But while you can approve your ends to Christ, yourselves may answer Satan in the hindrances he will throw in your way. For example :

Satan. Why art thou so solicitous for thy soul? Thou mayest be saved without all this ado. It is more than needs.

Soul. No, Satan! All I can do is too little, had not Christ undertaken for me. But I will not do the less for Christ's doing so much.

Satan. All thou doest is to no purpose; thou shalt be damned at last.

Soul. Could it be so, I would rather serve God for nothing, than thee for all thy flattering, lying promises. I will do God all the service I can for the mercies I have received, though I should never have more.—The very work of religion is better than the work of sin, even without reward.

Satan. Spare thyself, poor soul! Thou art not all spirit; thou hast flesh and blood as well as others. Why wilt thou expose thyself to contempt and sufferings?

Soul. Peace, Satan! Be it known to thee, and to all thy imps, I had rather have your hatred than your love. All your kindness to me is to ruin me.

Satan. Be not so conceited of thine own wisdom. Look about thee in the world.—Have not others souls to save as well as thou? and they do not proudly pretend to be wiser than their neighbours.

Soul. Begone, Satan! If others neglect salvation, therefore must I? Will their missing of salvation relieve me for the loss of mine? Though a Peter persuade Christ to spare Himself, He would not yield a minute (Mark iii. 21, 31). By the grace of God (though I shall come infinitely short), I will make Christ my pateru; and therefore, Satan, say thy worst, and do thy worst.—*Annesley.*

Temperance Hymn.—

GOD GUIDE THE YOUNG.

Tune.—GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.

O Lord preserve the young,
And guide them all life-long—

God guide the young;
Render them virtuous,
Gentle and courteous,
Neither false nor covetous;
God guide the young.

'Train them in wisdom's ways,
To serve Thee all their days;
God train the young;

Make them obedient
To teacher and parent,
Submissive and patient;
God train the young.

Bless them with all they need,
With health and strength their meed;
God bless the young;

As their souls are precious,
Unto them be gracious,
And for the sake of Jesus,
God save the young.

From sinful temptation's power,
God keep them every hour,—
God keep the young:

Good cause sustainers,
Ready refrainers,
Constant abstainers,
God make the young.

GLASGOW.

W. K.

RELIGION FALSE AND TRUE.

A painter has undertaken to portray on his canvass flames of fire. He does it so exactly that you can hardly detect it from real flames. But look! you see flies and other insects passing across it: they could never pass across real flames. Just so, spiritual insects, in the shape of sins, will pass across the mere professor, which they could never do across one who had the power of real religion in his heart; the former has but the "form" of flames "of godliness," the influential power is wanting.—*Rev. Dr. Jenkyn.*

What once was moss, see petrified to stone;
Life, texture gone, the form remains alone—
and hardens not the world by process slow,
Heart fixed where its enchanted waters flow?
The form of godliness may yet remain,
But can the worldly heart its power retain?

FAMILY PRAYER.

DEAR BRETHREN,—The last address which, with the view of promoting your spiritual benefit, it seemed good unto us to send unto you, was occupied with the subject of Secret Prayer.* We hope that, by the blessing of Almighty God accompanying that address, the object we had in view in it has been accomplished; that you have thus been excited to deeper reverence, earnestness, and sincerity in your approaches to God; and that the great duty and sublime privilege of secret devotion has been rendered a means of increased spiritual profit, and a source of augmented spiritual delight. With the view of still further advancing the glory of God and your spiritual interests, we again approach you with an address on a subject of no less importance; namely, Family Prayer. It would be exceedingly delightful to us, could we reasonably conclude that this good and wholesome practice was regularly observed by all the families under our inspection; but there is too much ground to fear that it is extensively neglected. The state of matters in this respect, which it is to be feared, prevails among us, is much to be deplored; and, therefore, we hope that you will bear with us, and lend us a candid and favourable ear while we, not as lords over you, but as helpers of your faith, and holiness, and comfort, call your attention to a subject so vitally interesting and important, and exhort you to the performance of a duty so pregnant with the most blessed results to yourselves and your families, the Church of Christ, and the world.

We invite you to consider the obligation under which you lie to worship God in your families. It is at once acknowledged, that we can bring forward no express scriptural command for the observance of family worship. But if we can show you on other clear and satisfactory grounds, that it is your duty and blessed privilege to render this homage unto God, we feel persuaded that you will not cavil at the absence of a formal, explicit injunction. Now there are many plain intimations in the Word of God

* The address here referred to, which was written by the Rev. Mr. Robson, appeared in *The Good News* of April 15th, of this year. The present is from the pen of the Rev. Mr. Henderson.

in reference to this duty, from which its indispensable obligation may be gathered. Thus, it is said, "Pour out thy fury on the families that call not on thy name,"—an imprecation which evidently implies that family worship is a matter of obligation, and that those families who neglect it are the objects of Divine displeasure. Again, it is said, "The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous,"—an assertion which evidently implies, that, as families, the righteous own and acknowledge God, and that the united voice of devout thanksgiving and praise is heard in their dwellings. It is observable that, in his epistle to the Ephesians, in connection with the injunction of certain domestic relative duties, the Apostle Paul thus exhorts them:—"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart unto the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God, even the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." And in the same connection, in his epistle to the Colossians, he says in nearly the same words:—"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing *one another* in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God, even the Father, through him." In both cases these exhortations precede the statement of domestic duties; but it is also remarkable, that, in each instance, the apostle accompanies the inculcation of duty with an injunction to prayer. Thus, in the epistle to the Ephesians, the statement is followed by this exhortation, "Praying *always* with *all* prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance;" and that in Colossians, by "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;" implying in both instances, a continued and regular course of family prayer, as well as reading the Word of God and singing. The same thing occurs in the First Epistle of Peter. After giving directions to husbands and wives as to how they were to behave toward one another, he enforces his statements by saying, "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers,"—that is, family prayers; the prayers which they

unitedly offer up at a throne of grace. But there is still more direct intimation of family prayer contained in the same epistle. He says, "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with your wives according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; *that your prayers be not hindered.*" In this last clause there is a direct reference to family prayer. It does not contain a positive injunction, but it plainly takes for granted that such a thing does exist,—that husbands and wives, who are heirs of the grace of life, do habitually unite together in prayer; for they are exhorted to live together, and act toward one another in such a way as that *their prayers may not be hindered.* But let us now refer you to what the Great Master himself announces in regard to this matter. He says, "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father who is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." The words are general, and refer to any two or three Christian brethren, but if such may agree in their petitions at a throne of grace, and if to such is given a promise so great and precious, how much more do the privilege and the promise belong to those who, united together by the most intimate and dearest ties, have so many sympathies in common, and so many things to agree about in asking from their Heavenly Father.

Such are a few of those intimations which the Word of God contains in regard to this subject; and we feel confident that you will give them your earnest consideration; and although none of them assumes the form of a direct and positive injunction, you will be ready to receive and obey them as equally authoritative and binding. In addition to these references to the Word of God, we invite you to consider the practice of good men in every age. For family worship is neither a piece of mere will worship, nor is it an innovation. It is evident that the first worship which men in a social capacity rendered to God, could only be family worship; and, as families became distributed in the earth, for a long time this could be the only form of social religious homage. Leaving the cradle of the human race, and visiting the tents of the

patriarchs, you behold Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, building altars unto the Lord, at which, not only they themselves individually called upon the name of the Lord, but there is the greatest reason to believe, they also gathered their households, and united with them in acts of devotion. Side by side with the public altars which were erected when the tabernacle was reared, and its numerous ordinances for public worship were instituted, the family altar was still maintained by the pious Israelites. "As for me and my house," said Joshua on a memorable occasion, "we will serve the Lord." "I will walk," says David, "within my house with a perfect heart;" and in exemplification of this pious resolution, we are told that, when he had brought the ark with great rejoicings to the place which he had prepared for its reception, "Then David returned to bless his household." Passing to the times of the gospel, we are informed respecting Cornelius the centurion, that he was "a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house"—that is, one that worshipped God with his household. History furnishes us with the fact, that domestic instruction and worship were practised by the early Christians; and we all know that careful family instruction, and regular family devotional exercises, were the almost universal practice of the pious and the good among all classes of society in days not very long gone by. But, in truth, this is only one of the ways in which the piety of God's people develops itself.—Wherever spiritual life in any degree exists, it manifests itself in religious conversation and prayer; and, if these evidences of genuine piety discover themselves anywhere, the family circle will surely, not only not be 'conspicuous for their absence,' but be the sphere of their first and truest, and fullest development. "It is hardly possible to conceive of two individuals, who are actuated by a principle of true religion, passing years together under the same roof, without uniting in their address to a throne of grace. We feel a persuasion, that two such individuals, though nowise related to each other, will be led to signalize their union by acts of social piety, and that as they must often hold sweet counsel together, so they will frequently be disposed to pour out their united supplications to God. How much more may this be expected to take place

betwixt those who are united in the close relation of husbands and wives, parents and children." As an evidence of this, we invite your attention to the remarkable fact, and would press it on your serious consideration, that wherever the shower of divine influence, which has been falling on various parts of our beloved land, has descended and left its holy impression, long decayed family altars have been rebuilt, and the fire of family devotion rekindled upon them, and in multitudes of other houses the voice of rejoicing and salvation, the peculiar characteristic of the tabernacles of the righteous, is now heard, where previously God was neither feared nor worshipped. Both the revival and commencement of spiritual life have been inaugurated by the erection of the family altar, the melody of family praise, and the voice of family supplication, on the part of thousands. Now, if the piety of God's people has in all ages manifested itself in acts of family devotion, does not its habitual neglect argue something wrong on the part of those professors who are chargeable with it? Does it not show a mournful want of spirituality—a lamentable deficiency of the living power of Christianity?

But now we invite you to consider the blessed effects which the worship of God in your families is fitted to produce. It is eminently calculated to exert a hallowed influence upon yourselves, and, through you, upon the Church and upon the world. By the blessing of God, it will prove an eminent means of grace unto yourselves and household. Its regular performance will diffuse a divine peace throughout your souls, arising from the consciousness of having discharged your duty. The morning devotions will exert a blessed influence upon all the labours, and transactions, and events of the day; while the evening exercises will have a hallowed tendency to calm the mind, and prepare for the repose of the night. Whatever happens to any member of your family in the course of the day, or during the night, will be sweetened and sanctified by reflection upon the devotions in which you engaged. But a particular and direct influence on your character and conduct will also be manifest. The act of summoning your family, morning and evening, to exercises of devotion, will naturally operate as a continual monitor to you, im-

pose a useful restraint upon you, and lead you to walk holly and unblameably. It will strengthen your sense of the obligation of domestic duties, forcibly remind you of what you owe to every member of your family circle, and cement the ties of conjugal and parental affection. As to the members of your family, its tendency, by the blessing of God, will be to form their minds to the love and practice of religion. Occupying a place, as it were, in a school of religious instruction, where the whole contents of the Sacred Volume are in due course laid open before them, and prayer devoutly offered in their hearing, your children and servants will increase in the knowledge of the Divine will, and "be continually reminded of their relation to God and the Redeemer, of their sins, and their wants, and of the method they must take to procure pardon for the one and the relief of the other," and impressed with a deep conviction of the necessity and importance of prayer. "Where a principle of religion is not yet implanted in the hearts of your children, family prayer, accompanied with the reading of the Scriptures, is, with the Divine blessing, the most likely means of introducing it. Where it already subsists, it is admirably adapted to cherish, strengthen, and advance it to maturity. In the latter case, it is like the morning and evening dew at the root of the tender blade." Nor will these happy effects be confined to your own household. The Church will participate in them. Fostered under such holy influences, families become nurseries of the Church of Christ, from which trees of righteousness, reared and tended first in them, are transplanted to, and flourish in the courts of the Lord. From them the ranks of the ministers of the gospel are filled up and increased, the elders of the Church are derived, and by them the places of the fathers are supplied; and thus one generation to another praises the works of the Lord, and declares his mighty acts. The world also participates in the blessed influence. Tending to enlighten the mind, purify the heart, form the character, and regulate the life of all the members of the households in which it is regularly observed, domestic worship, universally practised, would soon change the present aspect of the world. And though it is far, very far, from being so, yet, in the same way, the

few families comparatively, in which it is stately observed, are the world's best benefactors. They are "the salt of the earth;" they are "the lights of the world." Who can tell the amount of iniquity which is restrained by their influence? Who can tell the blessed effect of their example and exertions? Who can tell the amount of good done and enjoyed in answer to their united prayers? If, then, you would promote your own spiritual interests and those of your household—if you would serve your generation in the highest possible manner—if you would be instrumental in advancing the prosperity of the Church of Christ, and blessing the world—you have the means, under God, of doing all this, in the establishment and stated daily maintenance of the worship of God in your family.

From such considerations as those we have now laid before you, we feel persuaded, dear brethren, that you will be ready to acknowledge that to worship God in your family is at once a most important duty and an eminent means of grace.

Have you an altar erected to God in your household? If so, in order that your domestic worship may be a source of profit and delight, see that it be characterised by seriousness and solemnity. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." Engage in this duty heartily as a homage rendered to God. Owing to the depravity of our nature, it is apt to degenerate into a mere form. But if it is wanting in spirituality, if it is destitute of truth and life, it will not only be unprofitable and irksome to yourselves, but also an insult to God, instead of an acceptable offering. Beware, then, of mere formality, and see that you engage in this exercise with life and fervour. And while you desire to present an acceptable offering unto God yourselves, remember that others are engaged along with you, and seek to render the service interesting and profitable unto them. Try to engage their hearts in it as well as your own, and do not render it irksome and wearisome by its length. As it is not the form, but the spirit, so it is not the length of the service, which renders it acceptable unto God, "God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words be few." "When ye pray, use not

vain repetitions, as the heathen; for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking."

Have you hitherto lived in the habitual neglect of family worship? We exhort you to give the preceding statements your most serious and prayerful attention. "Examine yourselves." "Consider your ways." If to worship God in and with your family be an incumbent duty, its neglect must be criminal, and the longer you continue in its omission, the greater will be the accumulation of your guilt. If it be a most blessed privilege and an eminent means of grace, you are impoverishing your own and the souls of those dependent upon you, and depriving yourselves and them of many precious blessings and seasons of sweet and hallowed communion with God by your neglect. What hinders your discharge of this duty? Do you urge the plea of inability to conduct the exercises? How do you know that you are not qualified to perform this duty? Did you ever try it, and fail? God has promised to give you His Holy Spirit, if you ask Him, to help your infirmities, to teach you what to pray for, and how to pray. Have you ever pled, and been denied the fulfilment of His gracious promise? Until you have asked the Holy Spirit, and been denied His gracious influence,—until you have addressed yourself to the performance of this duty in a humble dependence on His aid, and have failed again and again, how is it possible that you can satisfy your conscience with the plea of inability? Do you urge the want of time? We appeal to your conscience, and ask you, as in the presence of God, if it is really true that you are otherwise so much engaged, and so pressed for time by the demands of business, that you cannot find a quarter of an hour, morning and evening, to devote to the worship of God in your family? Where is the man, whether master or servant, so incessantly employed, that he cannot habitually find more leisure than this? Is there not more time wasted every day, or, at all events, devoted to objects of such inferior importance, that would be far better employed in domestic worship? Having hitherto neglected this duty, are you deterred by a feeling of shame and backwardness from making a commencement? Let these terrible words of Christ sink deep

into your heart: "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels." Away with these and all other excuses. Let nothing cheat you out of the enjoyment of this blessed privilege. Let nothing hinder your discharge of this important duty. "The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked: but he blesseth the habitation of the just." "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

CHRIST.

At Mr. Spurgeon's Tabernacle on Sabbath, at the close of the services, Dr. Merle d'Aubigne said—When I heard your dear pastor reading to us in the 16th chapter of the Romans, I remembered those words which we find very often in the Epistles of Paul—"Love to the saints," and "Faith in the Lord." I will tell you one word from Rome. There was in the latter part of the sixteenth century, a man in Italy, who was a child of God, taught by the Spirit. His name was Aonio Paleario. He had written a book, called "The benefit of Christ's Death." That book was destroyed in Italy, and for three centuries it was not possible to find a copy; but two or three years ago, an Italian copy was found, I believe, in one of our libraries at Cambridge or Oxford, and it has been printed again. It is, perhaps, singular, but this man did not, as he ought to have done, leave the Romish Church. But his whole heart was given to Christ. He was brought before the judge in Rome by order of the Pope. They asked him, "What is the first cause of salvation?" and he answered, "Christ." They then asked him, "What is the second cause of salvation?" and he answered, "CHRIST." And they asked him the third time, "What is the third cause of salvation?" and he answered, "CHRIST." They thought he would have said, first, Christ; secondly, the Word; thirdly the Church; but no, he said, "Christ." The first cause, Christ; the second, Christ; the third, Christ; and for that confession which he made in Rome, he was condemned to be put to death as a martyr. My dear friends let us think and

speaking as that man. Dear friends, we find in the epistle to the Romans these words: "The whole church saluteth you." Now, we ask from you love towards us. We do what we can in that dark Continent to bring forward the light of Jesus Christ. In Geneva we have an Evangelical Society which has that work before it, and in other places we are also labouring; we ask for our work an interest in your prayers, for the work is hard among the Roman Catholics and the infidels of the Continent. I may mention to you that upon the tri-centenary anniversary of the death of Calvin, which will take place in two years, on the 27th of May, 1864, we desire to erect in Geneva a monument to the blessed Reformation, and to the Reformer who has been the instrument of God in promoting the true doctrine, not only in Geneva, but in a great many countries, and I ask also your interest in that work. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all! Amen.

THE USEFUL LIFE.

Go labor on; spend, and be spent,—
Thy joy to do the Father's will;
It is the way the Master went,
Should not the servant tread it still?

Go labor on; 'tis not for nought;
Thy earthly loss is heavenly gain;
Men heed thee, love thee, praise thee not;
The Master praises,—what are men?

Go labor on; enough, while here,
If he shall praise thee, if he deign
Thy willing heart to mark and cheer;
No toil for Him shall be in vain.

Go labor on; your hands are weak,
Your knees are faint, your soul cast down,
Yet falter not; the prize you seek,
Is near,—a kingdom and a crown!

Go labor on, while it is day,
The world's dark night is hastening on;
Speed, speed thy work, cast sloth away:
It is not thus that souls are won.

Men die in darkness at your side,
Without a hope to cheer the tomb;
Take up the torch and wave it wide,
The torch that lights time's thickest gloom.

Toil on, faint not, keep watch and pray;
Be wise the erring soul to win;
Go forth into the world's highway,
Compel the wanderer to come in.

Toil on, and in thy toil rejoice;
For toil comes rest, for exile home;
Soon shalt thou hear the Bridegroom's voice,
The midnight peal, behold I come!

HEATHEN BONDAGE.

WHAT THE HEATHEN WILL DO IN ORDER TO OBTAIN "REMISSION OF SINS."

The October number of the "Oriental Christian Spectator" gives an instructive, though melancholy account of the last days of a high-born Hindu lady. The princess, Baka Bai by name, was of the royal family of Nagpore.

"Rising at 5 A. M., she devoted the early hours to the worship of cows and the tulsi tree, after which she sat down to repeat the names of her gods; and, with the help of her rosary, to mark her progress. When interrupted, she was ready to converse with any one on worldly business. In the forenoon she was waited on by her priests, when she bathed, adored the sun, presented offerings at the shrines of her idols, and listened to poems in their praise. Having repeated new homage to the sun and a cow, she went round a certain number of ants' hills, and fed the tiny insects with sugar.

"This was followed by the worship of Brahmins. Those who had assisted in her devotions were joined by others, who sat down with them to dinner in the palace. Before they commenced, the old lady approaching the first, applied to the forehead the coloured mark usually made on idols, set before him a small spoonful of water, into which he thrust his toe, and ended by presenting him with an offering of betel leaves, flowers, money. When she had thus gone through the whole company, with the holy water that each Brahmin had thus consecrated, she retired to an adjoining room, and drank it up for the remission of her sins. The evening, when she partook of her only meal, witnessed proceedings similar to those of the forenoon, especially the adoration of cows.

"Every day did this jealous adherent of the Puranas spend her last twelve hours in the rites of her religion, and at her own expense entertained fifteen Brahmins, and double the number of Gosains; in addition, to all the priests and mendicants fed by the Rajah.

"In the beginning of September, 1858, Baka Bai fell sick; and as she was now eighty years old, it was feared that her end was near. Five cows were therefore introduced into the room where she lay, in order to be bestowed on Brahmins. Each cow

was led up near her couch with a halter. The recipient stood at its head; and the invalid giver was lifted up so as to take hold of its tail. The gift of the animal was accompanied with a further donation in money of fifty or a hundred rupees; and as, one after another, the cows passed onward from the bedside, they were supposed to help the dying woman forward on her way to heaven.

"As she became worse, an order was issued for a feast, and handsome sums of money were given to 300 Brahmins. Among the last acts of her life was to call for a cow; and having fallen at its feet, as far as her fast waning strength would permit her, she offered it grass to eat, and addressed it by the venerated name of 'mother.' While she was engaged in giving away more cows, she fell back and expired."

Such was the senseless course pursued by a lady of the highest rank in India! Such was her hope in death! There are millions of women, poor as well as rich, in that country at this moment, whose minds are as dark, whose religious rites are as foolish, and whose hopes for eternity are as vain!

The heathen perish; day by day
Thousands on thousands pass away!
O Christians to their rescue fly,
Preach Jesus to them ere they die.

Wealth, labour, talents, freely give,
Spend and be spent that they may live.
What hath your Saviour done for you?
And what for him should you not do?

THE FOXES, THE LITTLE FOXES."

The vineyard is a common Scripture emblem of the kingdom of God (Ps. lxxx. 8-16; Isaiah v. 1-7; xxvii. 2-6; Matt. xx. 1-16; xxi. 28-44; Mark xii. 1-12; Luke xx. 9-18.) That kingdom has been established not only in the world and the Church, as among the Jews of old, but also in each believer in Jesus. Thus every true Christian's heart is a vineyard of God. His grace is the vine: implanted there; and as Eden was given to our first parents to dress and keep it, so this vine, God has committed to His people's care. This will help you to understand the charge addressed to them by Christ the Beloved (Song of Sol. ii. 15:—"Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines; for our vines have tender grapes."

No plant requires such constant tender care, but none yields fruit so sweet or precious. Planted in a barren soil, it is well supplied with nourishment by the great Husbandman. His Word, with its laws, its warnings, its invitations, its exceeding great and precious promises—His ordinances—His Holy Spirit, shedding life and light upon all;—these, if prayerfully used by us, will give it growth and vigour, luxuriant verdure and rich clusters—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, faith, temperance. Such are the fruits, the “tender grapes,” we should bring forth to God. Yet all will be in vain, unless we protect the vine from harm. And in this, too, we are not left unassisted; for the great Husbandman shares this work also. He says, therefore, “Take us, or let us take, the foxes, the little foxes.”

“The foxes, the little foxes,” cunning, deceitful, mischievous, destructive, what a fitting emblem this of the sins, the little sins, that deceive and ruin men’s souls!

Three great foxes, each followed by a crowd of little ones, are ever besetting us on all sides. The Bible calls them “the world, the flesh, and the devil.” The last is the worst, and leader of all. Sometimes he himself breaks through to steal, but oftener he spies out the weakest points, and here and there, where the fence may be broken down or where it may be left unguarded, he sends in some little fox, whose presence, perhaps, is only discovered when the vine is spoiled and the tender grapes devoured. At other times (for well he knows that the idle are his easiest victims), he waits till we have ceased to pray and watch, and grown weary of God’s work, and then some little fox comes on the devil’s errand and seeks admission to the garden of our hearts. Ah! how wily and fawning, and fair-spoken are these little tempters. “Open the door and let me only look in—let me just put in my head—let me in altogether, just this once—I will do no harm, and never come back again.” So sin gains an entrance. Then how sadly is the vine spoiled, and the tender grapes laid waste, the rich clusters of holiness and peace of mind. And believe me, they do well who ever all their life long, can take such foxes and kill them and cast them out, so that they may never revive and return again.

Another of the great enemies of the spiritual vine is the world. Nothing is more sad than to see what ought to have been the garden of God, overspread with the rubbish and weeds of worldliness, the light of heaven withdrawn, and so utterly desolate, that the foxes go in and out at will through its broken fences. And yet what a common case this is, for many there are of whom we would believe that “the root of the matter” is in them, the foliage of whose profession is stunted and blighted, and whose fruit never comes to perfection, because they love this

evil world. *Bad companions*, for example, are among the most dangerous of the foxes, that spoil the vine, and especially, dear children, with such as you. There have been many on whom the tender grapes of youthful piety have thus been destroyed. If you would be pure and happy in your life, make Solomon’s rule your guide—“My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.” O, while in the world, we must live above it.—The vine that trails upon the ground is an easy prey, but that trained high on the trellis is beyond the reach of foxes. True piety is lofty. A holy life is a heavenly life. By faith and hope and love to God, live near to Him, and you are safe.

The third great hindrance to the growth of God’s grace in the soul is our own sinfulness. Alas! the foxes are in the vineyard already, lurking amongst its verdure and making sad havoc of its fruit. Even in those hearts where the heavenly vine is planted, there are “roots of bitterness” left. Ah! here is more than enough for the strongest of us to do—to pluck these up, and take the foxes that hide beneath them, and cast both out together. But is it not very sad that so many, even of true Christians, have in their vineyard some fox which they fondle and caress? It lies in their bosom, and wherever they go it follows. And what else is “besetting sin” but a pet fox? Is there anything you love which you know is hateful in the sight of God? That spoils the vine. You may fancy that it is but a little fox and cannot do much harm: but it does. Ah! how many clusters are thus stolen away and destroyed. One little fox, left untaken, may do more harm than the wild bear from the wood. And think you that the Beloved will abide in your heart, if you suffer it to be a den of unclean beasts, or will He shave your tender grapes with the foxes?

Surely this will be the prayer of every one of my young readers who loves the Lord Jesus:—“Awake, O north wind, bitter blasts of sorrow: and come thou south, laden with the breath of joy: Spirit of the living God, blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out that my Beloved may come into His garden and eat His pleasant fruits.” What a feast this which His people share with Him even now! But it is only a foretaste of that joy unutterable and full of glory to which at length they shall sit down with Him forever—the full vintage, of which these tender grapes are but the first-fruits. But hour by hour, as you work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, looking up to Him for grace to will, and strength to do His good pleasure, never forget, dear children, to give back to Him the charge He has given you, and say, “Lord take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines for our vines have tender grapes.”—*The Sabbath Scholar’s Treasury.*

THE GOOD NEWS.

AUGUST 1st, 1862.

QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT.

The language of this injunction is figurative. It represents the Spirit under the figure of a fire, dwelling within the heart of the converted man, whose light and heat may be increased or diminished by the treatment it receives, and by employing this figure we will easily understand the different means that are calculated to quench the Spirit.

We know that, however brisk and bright a fire may burn just now, it will be quenched by the *neglect of proper fuel being furnished*. Fuel may be at hand, may be in the house, but unless it be given to feed the flames, the fire will be quenched. So is it with the Spirit. He may be quenched by neglect of fuel. The fuel may be in our house in the form of God's Word, but because it is neglected to be read, the Spirit is quenched. The fuel may be in our hearts in the gift of prayer, but because we restrain and do not stir up the gift which God hath given us, the Spirit is quenched. The fuel may be in our neighbourhood in the public ordinances of grace which God hath appointed and established among us, but because we do not avail ourselves of the opportunity, and neglect to assemble ourselves together, the Spirit is quenched. The fuel may be in our family or among our friends in fellow-believers, but because we neglect to exhort each other daily, and to talk of the things that pertain to Christ, and the welfare of His kingdom, the Spirit is quenched. O! the baneful influence of neglect. Many a sweet songster has had its warbling stopped by the cruelty of man's neglect. Many a noble spirit has had his hopes crushed, his energies weakened, and his spirit broken by those who did not mean

to do him harm, but simply neglected to give that countenance and encouragement which it was their duty to do. In this form "man's inhumanity to man has made countless thousands mourn." But to "quench the Spirit of God by neglect;" to grieve Him by whom we are sealed unto the day of redemption, by forgetting His presence, is not only sinful in a great degree, but also injurious to our own souls.

We know that a fire will be quenched by being *furnished with improper fuel*. Every housewife knows to her cost that wet or rotten wood is worse than none. It quenches the fire instead of feeding it. So is it with the Spirit. He is quenched by the reading of improper books, by reading proper books improperly, or by reading too much of any class of publications, the tendency of which is not to fan the flame of our devotions. He is quenched by the formal discharge of personal and private duties, which are the production of habit, and are destitute of living power. He is quenched by the ordinances of worship being put in the place of the object of worship, and the attendance on them regarded as all that is required to secure salvation. He is quenched by the careless and trifling conversation with fellow-Christians about things of trifling or passing interest, when the great subject of Christ and the principles of his kingdom are completely disregarded. From these and other causes of a similar kind, the Spirit of God is quenched within the soul. Hence it is we are cold in conversation about Divine things. Hence it is that we are engrossed with the seen of the present world, and disregard the unseen realities of the world to come. Hence it is that we labour and spend our strength for nought. Hence it is that we ask and receive not, because we ask amiss.

We know that a fire will be quenched by being covered with ashes, or by other

So is it with the Spirit of God. The desire for the possessions of the world which many indulge, occupying much of the thoughts, breaking out frequently in conversation, and engrossing the energies of life in their acquirement, has the effect of quenching the Divine life in the soul. The care and anxiety that many take about the events of the future, bearing the trouble of to-morrow which they have no occasion to bear to-day, and making themselves miserable by the conjurations of their own fancy, has the effect of quenching the Spirit, and preventing that calm and holy rest in God, that is the result of faith in His over-ruling providence. The pursuits that many follow when they yield to the tricks in trade, and the questionable conventionalities that custom hath honoured and long practice made familiar, tend to quench the Spirit, taking the tenderness from their conscience.

Therefore, "Quench not the Spirit." When holy thoughts are in the mind, cherish them. When good suggestions are made, entertain them. Read God's Word. Meditate upon it and the display of God's love in sending His Son. Talk by the way of the things God hath done for your soul, and pray much, so shall the Spirit of God dwell in you in rich abundance.

THE BLOTTED PAGE.

"There, now Minnie, you've made a blot and spoil that copy, right at the beginning too." The speaker, a little boy of six years old, was sitting on a bench beside his sister watching her with evident admiration, while she traced the large characters in her first copy book.

"Well that is tiresome, after all the trouble I've taken to keep this book clean," said Minnie, in a sorrowful voice. "Somebody must have filled that stupid ink-bottle too full, but it can't be helped now I suppose, so I'll just leave off here and begin on a new

clean page further on." "No I won't, I'll tear this leaf out, and then I won't have one bad copy in the book."

These words reached my ear in the adjoining room, where I was sitting alone finishing a dress for Minnie. The children were not aware of my proximity, and I did not choose to interrupt them. But my little nieces' remarks awakened serious thoughts in my mind, which though not new to some of us, are worth considering, and may be profitable to you and me, dear reader.

As the sun rises each morning and sheds his beams abroad upon the earth, a new clean page is opened for each of us, on which to write the story of our lives, and when the lesser glory of the moon succeeds, the written page is turned, no more to be seen till the day of judgment. Ah! who has not wished to unfold it, to make here a correction and there an addition; to draw the annihilating pen through passages that are painful to recall. But there it remains, irrevocably sealed, a sting that is gone in the full meaning of that momentous word.

I think I see a volume before me now. I will not glance upon the title page. It matters not whose name is there inscribed. It might be yours or mine, reader. The book is incomplete. There are still clean pages to be written upon. But what has been written? Ah! here is a page clean in the beginning, but sadly blotted near the end, and here another which appears fair at a glance, but look closer and you will see it cannot bear inspection, and here are four unfinished, one scarcely begun. Look a little further on, and you will find some wet with tears of penitence, and closely followed by others which appear to be carefully written, but are still far from perfect.

But we need not go on. It were vain to look for one without a fault. Let this our comfort be, that He whose eyes alone can read aright these pages of our lives

knows of the trembling hand that guides our pen and seeks but to find His own dear name inscribed upon each page. Reader, shall He seek in vain. Oh! pause for one moment and think what is the story of your life? which will one day be read before men and angels in another world.

Think because it is all important to you. Think because time is hurrying you into eternity. Your days are becoming few. Prize each one as if it were your last. God has given you to-day to spend for him. To-morrow may be denied. ETHEL.

CONSECRATED ART.

"Then wrought Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise-hearted man, in whom the Lord put wisdom and understanding, to know how to work all manner of work for the service of the sanctuary, according to all that the Lord had commanded."—*Ex. xxxvi. 1.*

Interesting notices of the mechanic arts occur in the Exodus. It is certain that they were cultivated with great success in Egypt both before and after the time of Moses. It is probable that the Hebrews, although kept in a servile condition, were equal to their masters in mechanical skill. We are too apt to form our conception of slaves in eastern countries and ancient times, on the model of the examples which have occurred in our own experience. In at least one decisive feature the cases are totally different; the slaves whom the Egyptians oppressed were, as a race, in all respects, equal to their oppressors. Instances were not rare in which they rose to the highest offices in the state. Joseph was bought from a gang of travelling chapmen; and yet he became virtually the ruler of Egypt. How different is the relation between master and slave in the States of America! Not long ago a member of the servile race, although personally a freeman, and a doctor of divinity to boot, was by the decision of a legal tribunal in New York, denied the right of riding in an omnibus beside men who owned a whiter skin. Doubtless, some Hebrew patriots followed the standard of Moses, who had by their skill ornamented the palace of the Pharaohs. The talent which they had acquired in the house of bondage, was afterwards employed in the interests of liberty.

The Egyptians by the Exodus were spoiled of the jewellers as well as the jewels,—of the goldsmiths as well as the gold.

It is sadly instructive to notice that the first application of mechanical skill among the liberated Hebrews, was the construction of an idol. The golden calf is the earliest specimen of their art after they obtained their independence. The readiness with which they fell into idolatry reads a humiliating lesson to human kind in every age. Aaron, in his lame apology, says (*xxxii. 24*), "I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf." Thus a naughty child, caught in the act, ventures half a lie to hide his transgression. No doubt, he or the workman at his bidding, cast the gold into the furnace, and the calf came out; but this is not the whole truth in the case. They planned and executed the image.

Yet it was true in a deeper sense than the equivocators intended, that they poured in the metal and the calf came out. This was the form of art into which both their hands and their hearts readily glided.—Apis, the chief deity of ancient Egypt, was an ox. The figure of an ox, accordingly, was most familiar to the Hebrew artisans, and into this figure their effort naturally fell, as soon as they began to make images on their own account. They did for themselves when free, what they had done for their masters in bondage.

The history here is transparent, and the moral shines clearly through. It is not necessary to fetch the lesson from afar; the lesson offers itself unsought. Wisdom creeps out on the surface here. Mark the terrible perverse power of early habit and education on the moral and religious sentiments of a community. Moses, by divine inspiration, was raising the people up to worthy conceptions of God's being and character; but when his hand was removed for a day, the dead-weight gravitated into idolatry. From childhood, that generation of Hebrews had seen and heard the pomp of heathen worship. Their memory was charged with it; and the lessons taught them of Abraham's faith were not able to overcome the tide of daily universal habit.—How hard it is for even true converts in a heathen land to shake off entirely the bondage of idolatry; and how precious to us is our birthright in this land! Let us learn

O pity and bear with the weakness of those who have been steeped in heathen habits in their youth; and let us learn also not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought. I tremble to think what I might have been and done in matters of religion, if I had not enjoyed the goodly heritage of gospel light and liberty won by the struggles of faithful forefathers.

From the history of the Exodus, we learn that, while the application of art in the service of idolatry came easy and natural to the artists, the application of art to the worship of God was the result of divine qualification and call. The workers were chosen, and their work prescribed; "I have called by name Bezaleel and Aholiab."—Rather, at the very time when the men of Israel were applying their skill to the construction of an idol, God was intimating to Moses on the mount his choice of that skill for the purposes of his own worship.—Whether the same two men, Bezaleel and Aholiab, who were selected as the architects of the tent-temple for the worship of God, were employed by Aaron to make an idol in imitation of the Egyptian Apis, we do not certainly know. The artificer of the golden calf is not named in the Scriptures. But it is in every way probable that the same men who constructed the idol were afterwards employed in the service of true religion. The skill of those men would be well known throughout the community.—A talent such as this cannot be hid. It is the ordinary method of the Divine government not to create new faculties, but in a kingly way to take possession of faculties already existing, and impress them by the power of love into the service of the King. Thus, Saul of Tarsus was taken captive, and his skill transferred to the service of the Conqueror. The chief priests kept that man in constant employment. His task was to destroy the Church. His great and peculiar talents were laid out in the service of the enemy, before he became a vessel to bear the name of Christ. But, as in the case of the ancient Hebrew artists, the decree had gone forth on the mount, while they were in the flagrant act of idol-making in the valley, that their skill should be forthwith consecrated to the service of God; so, at the very time that the young man Saul kept the clothes of the ruffians who murdered Stephen, the purpose of the Lord was

sure, and the decree was already on the wing that should arrest the man, and employ his varied learning in establishing the kingdom of Christ. It is a common method of Divine Providence to take from the adversary his ablest hands, and make them willing workers on the side of righteousness. The skill that made an idol winsome, so as to lure human souls into idolatry, will be employed to decorate the temple of the living God. The native energy and scholastic acquirements, which in Saul the persecutor compassed the death of a few believing men and women in Jerusalem, in Paul the apostle carried the gospel over Europe, and undermined the foundations of idolatry.

A movable temple in miniature was constructed for the use of the nomadic tribes. Considering the circumstances and condition of the people, there was a great measure of completeness and splendour in the provision made for Divine worship amongst them. Each portion of the structure and each appointed ceremony had a typical significance. On a similar plan, and with larger dimensions, the temple was afterwards reared and furnished at Jerusalem. Both in the earlier tent, and in the later temple, art in the highest forms then available was lavishly employed. The ritual was sumptuous to the outward eye, as well as spiritually significant to the faith of the thoughtful.

But the partisans of the Romish ritual take nothing by this. The sensuous and gorgeous devotional culture of the Papacy, so far from being an imitation of the Hebrew worship, is in violent opposition to it on the vital cardinal point. By Hebrew law and practice the method of modern Rome would have been condemned and destroyed as idolatry. In the Theocracy there was only one temple; there was no duplicate of the gorgeous culture established there. When a portion of the tribes settled on the east of Jordan were suspected of an intention to establish another altar, the nation rose in arms, and were prepared to blot the stigma out, if necessary, in the blood of their brethren (Josh. xxii.) In later times, a distinguished proselyte of Ethiopia, when he desired to worship, found it necessary to travel all the way to Jerusalem. He could find no altar and no priesthood nearer home.

The fine-art worship of Rome is set up everywhere. It is repeated like echoes

among the hills, or ripples on the sea.—The costly, decorated, sensuous worship of the Hebrews was one. Sternly were the people forbidden, under pain of death, to set up any second. There is a world of meaning in this. We know that the divinely-appointed symbolic ritual of Israel was a type of true heavenly things. The Coming Event cast this shadow before it. One light throws only one shadow. Where there are many shadows, we know there must be many lights. The light in heaven which spreads day on earth is one: the many lights are of man's kindling, and tenants of the darkness. Besides, when the sun reaches the zenith, even the one shadow ceases. Such is the condition of the Church since the Light of the world has come in full. The shadows have disappeared, and "looking unto Jesus" through the transparent glass of the Word is now the common and equal privilege of all believers.

Art, both in its useful and ornamental departments, revives and flourishes in our day. How can it be baptized by the Spirit, and employed in the service of Christ?—Not by bringing it bodily into Christian worship. Art thus employed will, like a drunken mother, overlay in the night her living child. Let "the simplicity that is in Christ" preside in the worship of God, and let Art as a servant go out to the field and gather tribute for the king.

How vast is the mechanical power, how exquisite the skill and taste of the civilized nations in modern times! Let the Great Exhibition testify. Can this power be yoked to the chariot of the gospel, in order to hasten its progress through the world? Can this beauty be employed in making the truth more attractive, so that it may win the nations to the Saviour? They may; they shall; but the blessed consummation cannot be attained by any rude material process. Gold and silver, wood and iron, are not plastic in the Holy Spirit's hands. In the human soul sits the disease that perverts the art; to the human soul must the cure be applied which shall make all art loyal again to the King Eternal.—Alas, our art, with the wealth which it brings, seems to gravitate, like that of the Hebrews, to idolatry! We do not make a calf and dance round it. Covetousness is a more refined and equally real idolatry.—

Other worships, less reputable, but even more imperious, draw devotees in thousands to their shrines. If the skilful, wealthy, powerful persons were converted to Christ, the skill, and wealth, and power would become tribute in his treasury.

The Art of Britain lacks the blessing because her artisans, the pith and the marrow of the nation, are in a great measure ignorant of the gospel and estranged from its ordinances. It is in vain to expect that those who do not fear God will regard man. The chief effort of the Church should be directed toward the chief constituent of the population. What the artisans are this country will eventually be. If this mighty mass run to corruption, nothing will save the commonwealth.

There has been great danger: but the worst is past. We are in a much healthier condition to-day than we were ten years ago. There is no cause to despair or despond. Christian patriots may well thank God and take courage. Much has been already gained, and the capital already in hand, if well laid out, may greatly increase the ratio of our profits in the next decade. Hopeful hearts are needed, and active hands. Art and all its products will be truly consecrated when the artists are new creatures in Christ. There is no royal, at least there is no easy, superficial road to this consummation. As Saul's learning and energy were wrenched from the service of the wicked one, and consecrated to the honour of God and the welfare of man, so must the skill of our manufacturing population be diverted from multiform vices, and compelled to flow in a great, pure stream of devotion and beneficence. The men must be met in the way of their wickedness, and laid prostrate before Christ. When they are raised again, they will cherish another spirit and tread another path. By the power of redeeming love in their hearts, many of those who were formerly counted not only wise, but also repulsive and dangerous as serpents, have become harmless as doves. The progress already made in this direction should rebuke our fears, kindle our hopes, and redouble our efforts. Value them as men; love them as brothers; stand beside them in human sympathy, and pour the gospel as balm on their wounded spirits. "He that winneth souls is wise."

CROW WORSHIP IN INDIA.

The Hindus have a superstition, that the spirits of their dead pass into the bodies of animals. It is taught in their Shasters that men pass through 8,400,000 births in order to become free from sin! For some reason, unknown to me, and very likely as little known to themselves, they have fixed upon the crow as the special representative of their deceased ancestors. The crow in India is not wild, but very tame and bold. He builds his nest on the tree right before our door, is always ready to pick up the crumbs when the table-cloth is shaken; and, when very hungry, has been known to come in through a window and help himself to a piece of bread from the table, if not watched, or even snatch it from the hand of a child who was too young to defend itself.

The crow is very shrewd and cunning in many of its ways, and exhibits a rare degree of bird-wisdom, which I think may be one reason why he has been exalted to such dignity among the Hindus. These people are accustomed to make a feast for the crows once a year, which they call "Ancestors' dinner." But why they feed them only once a year, when the birds want food every day, I have never heard them explain. They sometimes also make offerings to their deceased friends twelve days after their death, and these are given to the crows. I saw one of these ceremonies a few months ago, of which I will tell you.

One Saturday in January, I pitched my tent under a sweet acacia tree, on the bank of a small stream, near a village. The next morning, soon after sunset, I noticed about a dozen men on the bank of the stream, preparing a feast for the crows. There was one Brahmin among them directing the others, who doubtless expected a better dinner than the crows for his pains. According to his directions the principal person (whose friend had died) made three little piles of sand in the dry part of the bed of the stream. On each of these he set up a little flag, about a foot high, and near it an earthen vessel, with a cake of unbaked dough. This was the feast. When all was ready he kneeled down before it, and prayed to his ancestors to come and accept it. Then all the men withdrew a little way, and sat down to wait for the crows to come

and eat it before any other animal has touched it, this is a sign that their ancestors are happy and pleased with them; if not, they are offended; so they are very anxious to have the crows come and taste it first. The crows had been on the watch, and soon came, lighting on the ground near the food. They did not at once pounce upon it, however, but, as if wishing to assure themselves that there was no trap, advanced cautiously, cawing and talking among themselves in a manner quite fitted to confirm the poor Hindu in his belief that there was something more than bird intelligence in them. Just then a kite (a larger bird than the crow) came flying along, and, seeing the table spread, he concluded to invite himself to dinner. He commenced sailing around just above it, preparatory to making a swoop and carrying off one of the cakes. This would have been fatal to the poor Hindu's peace of mind, so he began to throw stones at the kite to drive him away, in doing which he frightened the crows also. These, however, soon returned, while the poor kite, finding he was not welcome went off, and did not, like some very unpolite people, again intrude himself upon a dinner party where he was not wanted. Becoming tired of the delay, the Brahmin told the man to invoke his ancestors again. So he began bowing down to the crows and saying, "Oh, good Sirs, why are you angry? come." In a few moments the bird satisfied that there was no danger, commenced eating; and the men being assured by the Brahmin—after receiving his fee—that all was right in regard to their deceased friends, returned to their homes.

In the village where we stopped two days before, a man made a feast for his relatives who had died, and invited the crows, as their representatives, to come and partake; but not a bird appeared. It happened that a company of English soldiers were encamped near there, and a cow was killed for them; this drew all the crows together, so that the man could not find a single guest for his dinner. After invoking them till he was tired, he went near the butcher's stand, and commenced stoning the crows away, hoping some of them would go in the direction of his feast. This was certainly a very rude way to get his friends to come and dine with him.

Such is the crow-worship, as it is practis-

ed by millions of people in India. It would be merely amusing were it not that such delusions are fatal to the soul. The ignorant worshipper flatters himself he is very devout, when there is not a particle of love to God in the heart. It is with such puerile notions that Satan fills the minds of this people, and leaves no place for the pure truth of the Bible.

Dear children, be thankful that you have heard the precious name of Jesus, and have the Bible that contains his promises, "true and faithful." And will you not pray for those children, who have never heard that blessed name? Pray for those in and around Ahmednuggur, for there are missionaries and native converts here, publishing the glad tidings which you know so well.—L. B.—*Church Miss. Juvenile Instructor.*

THE ONLY LIFE.

LIVE THE LIFE OF JESUS: ALL ELSE IS NOTHING.—Such were the dying words of the excellent and devoted Jean Louis Bostan, the companion and fellow-labourer of the faithful Felix Neff. When asked by the friend who stood by his bedside, a witness of the triumph of his closing hours, "Have you any personal counsel or advice to give me?" he replied, "*Live the life of Jesus: all else is nothing.*"

Memorable words! how deeply should they be impressed on the memory and heart of every one! The life of Jesus! How much is comprehended in those four short words! Humility, self-denial, benevolence, earnestness, constant converse with heaven, entire consecration to God, unwearied effort to do good to men—all these rise to our view as we think of the life of Jesus.

But to live this life, we must come to him through the cross, in penitence for sin, with full faith in him as the only and all-sufficient Saviour; giving up all that we have and are, to him and his service; asking as the one great question, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" confessing his name, obeying his laws, cherishing his spirit, imitating his example, labouring for the extension of his kingdom, aiming in all things at the advancement of his cause and the promotion of his glory. Like the great Apostle to the Gentiles, we must be able to say, "The life which I now live in the

flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." "For me to live is Christ."

Such a life is the only one worth living. It is the only life that can satisfy the sober judgment, or meet the demands of conscience, or fulfil the requirements of God; the only life that has peace and self-approbation in its progress, and joy in its end; the only life that is worthy of a rational and immortal being; the only life that will bear the test of the final judgment, and prepare for endless blessedness in heaven.

"*All else is nothing.*" Live for fame, and even if you gain its plaudits, they are not sure for a moment. The "*Hosanna*" of to-day may be the "*crucify him*," of tomorrow. Live for pleasure, and though it may, gratify for a season, you will find it like poisoned food, satisfying a present hunger, but leaving death behind. Live for wealth, and in the very aim you will fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition," and be in danger of "erring from the faith, and piercing yourself through with many sorrows." And even if you are successful, and gain the riches you desire, you can hold them but a little while, and cannot bear them with you to eternity; and if improved, "your gold and silver will be cankered, and the rust of them be a witness against you, to eat your flesh as it were fire." Live for the world in any form, and what shall it profit you, though you gain it all, if you lose your soul? *Live, then, the life of Jesus, for all else is nothing*, and so you will feel it to be in the hour of death, and at the final day.

O, that every one, old or young, idle or active, heedless or thoughtful, saint or sinner, could but have impressed on his mind, so as never to be forgotten, the maxim, "*Live for Jesus: all else is nothing.*"—*Am. Messenger.*

OURS IS A GLORIOUS BROTHERHOOD.

"One is our Master, even Christ; and all of us are brethren." The humblest Christian may exult in his fraternity. I am slow of speech, but I have had eloquent brothers: Robert Hall and Thomas Chalmers were both my brothers; and so was Chrysostom, and so was Apollon. I am no

poet, but my brothers, Isaac Watts and Charles Wesley, wrote some very good hymns,—and still better my older brother, the shepherd of Bethlehem. I can give you no right idea of living Christianity,—the sunshine of habitual communion with God, and the bright impressiveness of his visage who daily looks to Jesus; but I wish you had known my brothers Edward Bickersteth and Robert McCheyne; or those elder ones of whom I have heard so much, but whom I never saw—for they were gone ere I was born—the disciple whom Jesus loved, the man after God's own heart, the patriarch who walked with God. It does me good to think of them; and when I think of them, my spirit cleaves in love to you—for you are also one. Shake hands, We must not part. Your dress is different, and I do not like your provincial accent. But, beloved, we are both the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when our Elder Brother appears, we shall both be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And then, the same comprehensive and blessed home awaits us. In the Father's house are many mansions; and for each disciple a place is prepared already. Within the courts of that great palace there is a several dwelling-place prepared for each; and could we get a glimpse into the New Jerusalem, we should see the places all appropriated—we should see the mansions of which Abel and Enoch took possession long ago, and we should see others still waiting for their tenants. And should we find, on adjacent compartments, names that we scarcely expected to see in such close proximity; for instance should we read "Luther's mansion" next door to "Calvin's mansion," it need occasion no perplexity; for outside the whole we read, "The Father's house;" and, whatever may be the feelings connected with the self-contained and separate mansion, there will be a feeling more intense connected with the happy and all-inclusive home.

THE LOOK-OUT AT MASTHEAD.

The steamer Asia had a narrow escape on one of her summer trips, from a huge iceberg on the Grand Banks of Newfoundland. Going at the rate of ten or twelve knots an hour, "she had just entered one

of those heavy clouds which lie on the surface of the ocean, indicating the presence of a berg, when the look-out at the fore-topmast-head sung out at the top of his voice, 'Iceberg! hard a starboard!' Quick as thought the helm obeyed the warning, and the ship took a short sheer to port.—Instantly the towering mountain of ice with its cloud-piercing turrets loomed in terrific grandeur over the ship's starboard bow.—'Meet her,' roared the captain, and port went the helm. The counter motion barely cleared the wheel-house and stern of the ship from the iceberg, and the danger was past. A united scream from the timid rung through the ship, The stout-hearted stood motionless and awe-stricken; and even the ship herself almost seemed to be sensible of the providence which saved her and her freight of living hundreds from destruction, for her motion ceased and she stood as if paralyzed by the fright. Had the eyes of the look-out been diverted a single moment, had he hesitated to give the alarm but for a minute, or had the ship been less obedient to her helm, nothing could have saved a soul on board; and the fate of the Asia would have been as profound a mystery as that of the President."

Few can read this thrilling account without emotion. What, under God, saved this noble steamer? The quick eye, the instant warning, the obedient helm.—These were the instrumentalities of safety. And as we dwell upon the circumstances, the mind instinctively turns to those moral icebergs that are sweeping down the currents of society, clouding the atmosphere, and crushing many a noble spirit by their terrible might.

A young man is steaming on his way in prosperous business. Every thing looks safe. But has he a look-out at the fore-topmast-head? Clouds gather round.—Danger is on his track. Hark! a voice from the mast-head: "Useless expenses! failure! fraud! hard a-starboard!" Quick as thought, does the young man obey the warning? As ruin looms in terrific grandeur over his starboard bow, does he make a short sheer to port?

A young man has left his early home, and with strong and buoyant spirit, is dashing over the ocean of life. Sunshine is overhead. Favouring winds swell his

sails. But has he a look-out at the mast-head! He enters the heavy clouds which sometimes lie on the bosom of life's troubled waters. Are they not tokens of hidden peril! Hark! a voice at the mast-head: "Profligate companions! drinking, dissoluteness, death! hard a-starboard!" Quick as thought does the young man obey the warning? And as vice looms in terrific wildness over his starboard bow, does he make a short steer for port?

A young man has embarked on life's sea freighted with eternal hopes. The word of God seems to be his chart, faith his compass, and the obedient will at the helm. The prayers of pious friends go with him. God's people watch his course with grateful joy. The Sun of righteousness seems to illumine his path by day, the Star of Bethlehem by night: all seems well with him.— But has he a look-out at the mast-head? There is a change in the spiritual atmosphere. A chill and cloud envelope his way. Unseen danger lurks on his track. Hark! the voice of warning: "Prayerless days, broken vows, profaned Sabbaths! hard a-starboard!" Quick as thought does he obey the warning? And as "lost character" looms in terrific boldness over his starboard bow, does he make a short sheer to port? If the eye is diverted, if there is hesitation in giving the alarm, if there is less obedience at the helm, nothing but a miracle of grace can save that soul from shipwrecked hopes and a lost eternity.— Young man, have you a good look-out at your mast-head?

CHRIST THE MASTER.

"The Master is come, and calleth for thee."—
JOHN IX, 28.

No name was given. No name was needed to be given. Mary knew who was come, soon as it was whispered to her, "The MASTER is come." This title belongs only and supremely to Christ. He alone deserves it. He alone can sustain it. "MASTER" of what? Of all creation—of all providences—of all blessings, temporal, spiritual, and eternal—of all mankind—of all angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim—of devils—of all agents and agencies—and MASTER, also of Death. "Lazarus come forth." And oh! what a MASTER for kindness of heart, love, and sympathy? "Jesus

wept." And what a Master to reward his faithful servants! "I appoint unto you a kingdom, even as my father hath appointed unto me!"

"The Master is come." When came he? In the hour of extremity. This he has ever done, ever does. He came to man in his low estate, when cast out to the open field in his blood, with no eye to pity him or hand to help, and said unto him, "Live." So he comes to every child of woe who looks for him—to Joseph in prison, to Daniel in the den, to the children in the furnace, to Abraham on the mount, and to those sorrowing and weeping sisters.

And how comes He? As man—in all the pity, love, and sympathy in the human mind. "Jesus wept, yea, groaned in spirit, and was troubled." But He came as God also—came in all the majesty and power of Deity. "Lazarus, come forth." Others, many, had come to sympathize and weep with him. Jesus did the same. But he came as the MASTER, to wipe dry their tears—came as the "Restorer" as the healer of the breach—as the Comforter, one among a thousand. "Lazarus, come forth! and he who had been dead came forth."

"The Master is come." To whom? To thee, mourner—to thee, weeping Martha or Mary—to thee, afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted—to thee, bereaved widow—to thee parentless orphan—to thee, whosoever thou art, who art in trouble, "He is come." "Come," and by these troubles and trials "calleth for thee" to come to Him in his word, in his house, at the mercy-seat—to come to his embrace, his heart, his home.

"Calleth for thee." Religion is a personal thing. Its blessings, its privileges, its duties, its enjoyments, its promises, its rewards, are all personal.

"He calleth for thee," to personal piety. "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?"

And death is personal. And soon death will come, and call for each of us. Reader, are we ready for his call?—Appeal.

THE RIGHT WAY.—When art thou upon the right way? When above every thing thou lovest God, and above every thing fearest thyself.

Sabbath School Lessons.

August 10th, 1862.

RECONCILIATION.—MATT. v. 21. 26.

Our Lord having in the preceding verses declared that he came not to do away with the law and the prophets, now proceeds to strip the divine commandments of the vain glosses, which had been put upon them by the Pharisees.

1. *The meaning and extent of the sixth commandment are explained.*

It was said by them of old time or to them of old time as it is rendered in the margin.—

The commands of the Decalogue have never become obsolete or unsuitable; they are adapted to people of every age, and of every clime, and being founded on the rectitude of God they shall endure for ever. *In danger of the judgment.* According to the Pharisaical interpreters of the law, temporal death was all that the murderer had to fear. They shut their eyes to the eternal death beyond.—

The Jewish courts of Judgment were composed of 23 members who ordinarily sat in the gates of their principal cities, and tried, condemned, and executed murderers. Not only were the Pharisees ignorant of the eternal punishment to which the breakers of the law were subject, they also erred regarding the extent of the commandment. According to them, the taking away of life, from cherished malice, was what alone constituted murder. But our

Saviour informs us that excessive or unreasonable anger is murder in the sight of God, as also the calling of each other reproachful or opprobrious names. The word *brother*, used here, is applicable to all with whom we may come in contact, whether our superiors, inferiors, or equals. The different punishments mentioned seems to indicate a difference in the offences in point of heinousness. Note, *Raca* is a Hebrew word, and means a vain foolish person. The sinfulness of applying such epithets, of course, depends upon the spirit of the person who employs them. They are sometimes used with perfect propriety; Matt. xxiii. 19; Gal. iii. 1.

2. *The duty of seeking a reconciliation with our adversaries.*

If we would approach God by his ordinances, we must forgive all who have in any way injured us, Matt. vi. 14, 15, and not only so, we must seek, as much as in us lies, to make amends to those whom we ourselves may, in any way have injured.—*Zaccheus.* If the injuries we have done our neighbour are of such a nature as to render us amenable to the civil courts of justice, then, from prudential motives, we should seek to have our differences privately and amicably settled as

speedily as possible. Under this advice of our Lord, there is couched a spiritual matter of infinitely greater importance. We must remember that, in our unrenewed state, the Lord is our enemy. The law we have just been considering is sufficient of itself to condemn us. Let us seek a reconciliation 'while we are in the way with him,' while it is yet called to-day, and he still extends towards us his sceptre of mercy. Those who neglect to make their peace with God, in the day of their visitation, shall be cast into prison, until they have paid the uttermost farthing of their debt, a debt which with new sins goes on ever increasing.

Leavn.—1. The impossibility of justification by the works of the law; Ps. 143. 2; Rom. 3. 20; Gal. 2. 16; Tit. 3. 5.

2. That we should seek the Lord while he may be found; Ps. 32. 6; Is. 55. 6; Heb. iii. 13.

August 17th, 1862.

BRICKS WITHOUT STRAW.

EXOD. v. 1—23.

Having obtained the concurrence of the people, Moses and Aaron next present themselves before Pharaoh.

1. *They deliver their message.*

The Lord God of Israel. The Lord was before called the God of Israel—the person; Gen. xxxiii. 20, but this is the first instance of his being called the God of Israel—the people. *A feast unto me in the wilderness,* where they would not give umbrage to the Egyptians, nor receive any offence from them.

2. *Pharaoh's contemptuous reply.*

Who is the Lord? Pharaoh probably supposed that the God of so abject a people was not to be dreaded. He neither knew the Lord, nor did he seek to know him, only being transported with rage he determined not to obey him, nor to let his people go.

3. *The humble and gentle manner in which Moses and Aaron urge their request.*

The answer of Moses and Aaron was very conciliatory. They use no words of threatening. They simply state the fact of their having met with the God of the Hebrews, and express their fears of the consequences to the people themselves, if Pharaoh should still persist in his refusal to let them go.

4. *The barbarous commands of Pharaoh to the taskmasters of the Israelites.*

All Pharaoh's worst passions were now aroused. His determined obstinacy against the Divine will was manifested, and his covetousness was excited at the idea of losing the labour of so great a number of people. He

accused Moses and Aaron of seeking to injure the Egyptian community by taking such a multitude from their work. He charged the people with idleness. It has ever been common for the wicked to bring this accusation against the godly. They attach but little blame, if any at all, to spending time in the frivolous pleasures of the world, but they often censure, in the strongest terms, the devoting of time to the exercises of religion. The physical powers of the children of Israel had before been taxed to the utmost, 'they sighed by reason of the bondage, Chap. ii. 23, and now Pharaoh wished to impose upon them a still greater amount of labour. *Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick.* Some think that the straw was cut short and mingled with the clay. Others, that it was used, as it still is, in many places, to cover the clay, in order to protect it from the heat of the sun.

5. *The severity of the taskmasters.*

It seldom happens that tyrants are at a loss for agents to execute their cruelty. The Egyptian taskmasters seemed determined to carry out to the letter the oppressive designs of their master. It was probably to compel the officers of Israel to show cruelty to their brethren that they were punished for the people's failure, ver. 14.

6. *The officers of the people complain to Pharaoh.*

It appears that, even under the Egyptian despotism, they had access to the sovereign to lay their case before him. The tyrant's heart, however, remained unmoved by the touching representation of their grievances. He still persisted in demanding an impossibility, determined by oppression to eradicate all religious thoughts from their minds. This may serve to illustrate the case of the sinner under conviction. Though convinced of his utter inability to keep the law, he finds that it relaxes none of its exactions. Nay, when brought home by the Spirit to the conscience, the law appears more strict and more extensive in its requirements than it did heretofore. It demands perfect obedience. It extends not only to our words and deeds, but to our secret thoughts.

7. *They unjustly censure Moses and Aaron.*

On issuing from the royal presence they were first met by Moses and Aaron, who were doubtless anxiously waiting to hear the result of the interview. They could not have addressed Moses and Aaron with greater severity, if they had been impostors. To them they imputed the blame of the calamities which had befallen them. Thus too it is common for the awakened sinner to regard as his enemy the instrument of his convictions.

The officers of Israel appealed to the Lord to judge between them, and Moses and Aaron, having soon forgotten the proofs which had before satisfied them that the latter acted by the Divine authority and direction. *Moses returned unto the Lord.* The believer has a never-failing friend to whom he can have recourse in all times of necessity. By how many infirmities are even the most eminent saints encompassed! The words of Moses still manifest great unbelief. Because the children of Israel were not immediately delivered, but, on the contrary, their afflictions seemed multiplied, he was discouraged.—When everything does not happen exactly according to our mind how prone we are to lose confidence in God!

Learn.—1. That God endues his servants with the wisdom and courage necessary for the duty to which they are called; 2 Tim. 4. 18.

2. The enmity of the natural heart against God; Rom. 8. 7; Isa. 4. 4; 1 Cor. 2. 14.

3. The great persecutions which the people of God are often called upon to suffer; Ps. 34. 19; Matt. 16. 24; Acts. 22; 2 Tim. 3. 12.

4. That the good deeds of the ministers of God are liable to be misrepresented, not only by the world, but by their own brethren; Song 1. 6.

5. What a blessed privilege it is to be able to go to the Lord with our griefs, fully assured both of sympathy and help, Jno. 10. 9; Heb. 4. 16.

6. That when the Christian's prospects seem the most gloomy, the Lord has often the choicest blessings in store for him; Hab. 3. 17, 18, 19.

7. That we should therefore trust cheerfully in the Lord in all circumstances; Job. 13. 15; Ps. 40. 3; Prov. 3. 5.

THE BIBLE OUTSIDE, IF NOT IN.

In the first exhibition the Bible had a site of some honour; in the second it is consigned to the garret (*les mansardes*); but let us console ourselves for the bad position in which it is placed, much as we regret it, by thinking of the great work of the Word of God, now in the world. The Book must be sought out diligently, and if it is only to be found after long search *within* the great bazaar; on the *outside*, the stranger may say, *it seeks for Him*, and finds him everywhere. There is this striking difference between the two periods.—In 1851, if I had come here a Pagan, I should have returned a Pagan, for I do not remember any particular occasion on which I was, either personally or otherwise, invited to look

to the Lord Jesus. It is true that, beneath the crystal roof of the Palace in Hyde Park, as light and graceful as if a magician's wand had bid it rise out of the ground, there were mottoes taken from Holy Scripture, as there are inside the present building; but such passages did not speak of the Saviour Jesus any more than those at this time. I am sure that the Japanese Ambassadors have been in no degree scandalized, and that they could transfer these passages without difficulty, and without alteration, to the front of the first Exhibition which they may erect in their own country.

And yet, on the other hand, Christianity to-day comes forth boldly, and shows itself in many places besides the edifices consecrated to public worship. You may not enter a church to hear of it, but then you will find the church in the streets, and even in the shops. The Bible will follow you in all forms. I speak only of that which has happened to myself.

In one of your parks I was overtaken by the rain, and while seeking shelter, I perceived a little carriage, covered with glass, and drawn by hand, having books inside, also a placard on the top. These books were Bibles and the placard was a portion of one of the sayings of Jesus. I got into an omnibus, and I was scarcely seated before a person of respectable appearance—perhaps a BIBLE-WOMAN—took from her bag some ornamental papers, one of which she politely offered me. She did the same to all the other passengers, who received them with respect, and after having read them carefully folded them up. I kept mine: and this was its inscription:—

LIFE! LIFE!

EZEK. xxxiii. 11.

Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

JOHN V. 24, 26.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Another day, a little tired of walking, as those are who meet no friends, I entered a chop-house in Oxford Street, when my attention was immediately attracted by a hand-bill pasted against the wall; I went nearer and read as follows:—

“Courage, brother, do not stumble!
Though thy path be dark as night;
There's a star to guide the humble,
Trust in God and do the right.”

By the side, as if a commentary on these words I found this—

“God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Some days after, I went into one of those shops where they are accustomed to display the comic pictures of PUNCH, bottles of Macassar Oil, and playbills. While seated, during the preparations, the assistant made for cutting my hair, I perceived on each side of the window two cards, upon which were written sentences in large letters. I looked more attentively; they were also passages from the Bible, of which this was one: “And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads” (Isa. xxxv. 10). Were these things always thus visible? Are all the shops and chop-houses tributary to Paternoster Row? I do not know. I confine myself to the occasions where I found the Word of God was introduced to me.

It is the mission of Your Nation to bring about such a state of things. You must not fail to execute it. I will only offer an allusion to the large meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society in Exeter Hall, and to the cheers which followed the account of more than £168,000 expended last year, in distributing a million and a half of copies of Holy Scripture throughout the world. May England profit by the circumstance which has drawn in many foreigners to London, and try and bring each stranger into the presence of Jesus. If he only sees in the Exhibition the Pope's Breviary in the Roman Court, magnificently bound, what will he think? Let your nation offer to his eye The Book open, in all the simple and solemn authority of its manifold tongues, the letter from your Father who is in Heaven, and let the stranger be won to read it by witnessing its practice in the holy and lovely lives of those who present it to his notice.—*Pasteur Armand Delille.*

Another phase of OUTSIDE IF NOT IN, is to be observed in the efforts which the Bible Society have made since the refusal of their request by the Royal Commissioners, for any adequate amount of space in which to display their “Pearls,” “Rabies,” and “Diamonds,” in an appropriate and commanding position within the building.

They have established a temporary Depot in the only house they could secure, at No. 2, Brunswick Place, Brompton, very near the Exhibition, and only two or three doors from the entrance of the Kensington Museum.—Alas! few who arrive in carriages will stop thus short of their destination, but foot passengers will certainly note, on the right hand side of the highway, a window in which Bibles are offered for sale, attracted as their eye will be by renderings in many coloured letters, and

in various languages, on the white wall around, of the passage in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, "How hear we in our own tongues wherein we were born the wonderful works of God?" The attendant within speaks German, French, and English; we hope his sales may be far greater than were those to foreigners at the depots during the first Exhibition, viz., 848 Bibles and 1400 Testaments. Two colporteurs are stationed near the building to offer Foreign Scriptures for sale to those who will buy, while another sells English copies. The Society proposes to give away 10,000 portions of the Holy Word (neatly bound, like our small Gospels), in French, German, Italian, and Spanish, to those who will accept them. It has also recently provided 1600 Bibles for the hotels of London; also reducing the prices of Foreign Scriptures, during the time of the Exhibition, by a very considerable amount, to such purchasers as may desire them for sale; and it has taken a stall in the Palace at Sydenham, where the sales of Bibles are already encouraging.

These and similar operations of private Christians who have cared for the making known of the Law of the Lord at this period of the meeting of the nations, are full of interest. But all this, we maintain, is not enough, while it is excluded from its proper place of testimony under one of the domes of the Kensington Exhibition. There is yet space to be filled up, and if there were not, will no one sacrifice for it some toy-trophy, some display of dressing cases, or even a table of railway instruments? The British and Foreign Bible Society should not be represented there merely as the largest bookseller in the world, though that is something in the mart of commerce, it has circulated since the last Exhibition sixteen millions of copies of the message from God to all mankind—a wondrous proportion in comparison with its total of forty millions during its fifty-eight years' history! But it should have its place of mark as the jewel in England's crown, and as that one thing which makes her the Light of the Nations.—*The Book and its Missions.*

REPORTS OF MISSIONS.

Reports of Missions have from the first followed and anticipated real Mission work.—"The seventy returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name." They were taught, indeed, not to rejoice in this, but rather because their names were written in heaven; for the joy of our service to the Lord must not be substituted for our joy in the Lord himself. The Apostles, after their first missionary journeys, "gathered themselves together unto Jesus and told

him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught." For our first report, if we are good stewards, must be laid before the Lord—and it ought not to be a dry abstract of money received and spent; but a careful statement of what has been done and of what has been taught. These two heads are all-important; for what has been done and what has been taught include all our service. Our Lord does not, indeed, show any indifference to the purse and the scrip. He teaches how we are to go on His work without having them as a burden round our necks. He does not permit us to carry them at all till we know the meaning of his "Provide nothing—Go, and I will give you power." He has himself called for a report about supplies. "When I sent you forth without purse or scrip, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing."—Has not this been the answer of all true workers since?

In the early work of the Christian church, Reports have had an important place. After the day of Pentecost was fully come, and the disciples were filled with the Holy Ghost, we read that, "when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together." After the sudden judgment on Ananias and Sapphira, "great fear came upon all the Church, and upon as many as heard these things." It was when the "Apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John." When Peter "rehearsed from the beginning and expounded by order the Lord's work among the Gentiles, they of the circumcision held their peace and glorified God." When tidings came to the ears of the Church at Jerusalem of a great number turned to the Lord, they sent forth Barnabas that he should go as far as Antioch; and he, when he came and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and departed to seek Saul, and brought him unto Antioch. "And it came to pass that a whole year they assembled themselves with the Church and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." We need not multiply quotations. The whole history of Missions and of the Church shows the power which that history has had in continuing itself. Good News have not only come with Christ to the earth, but have been brought down by angels, and spread by shepherds and wise men and Samaritan women, and lepers and lame and sick folks that have carried abroad the story of their cure. We should hear and tell not only what the Gospel is, but what it does.

Inadequate convictions of what the Gospel is, will be found at the root of inadequate convictions of what the Gospel does; and as faith in the name of Jesus is needful to the

exercise of spiritual power, we need not wonder that little is done where little is taught. It is by what the Gospel does that the world will be stirred to understand what the Gospel is. Signs and wonders must therefore still be done in the name of the holy child Jesus: and those who are privileged to work miracles of grace through faith in that name, must feel with Paul: I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Those who feel that the Gospel is this, will look out for the usual results, or the reasons why they fail to appear. It is a necessary concomitant of a missionary spirit to expect great things from the preaching of Christ. A truly Missionary Church will therefore be as ready to make known what the Gospel does, as what it is.

Report of the Work of Revival in Dumbarton, Scotland.

FROM ITS BEGINNING IN AUGUST, 1858, TO
MARCH, 1862.

In August, 1858, a number of individuals, impressed with the necessity of having in this place a branch of the Scottish Reformation Society, met for the purpose of taking such steps as would lead to the accomplishment of that object. Unable at once to devise any definite course of action, meetings were held weekly, chiefly for prayer, to ask the guidance and blessing of God on their undertaking. It will be remembered that the great American Revival was then at its height. The minds of men in every part of the world were at that time occupied with the extraordinary results of that great awakening, and in Dumbarton we were in our prayer meeting engaged in asking the Lord to direct us in accomplishing one thing, strangely led to turn our attention, not to the object intended by us, but to another, the revival of true religion. Such was the attitude of this little band—all unconscious of what would be the blessed result. At one of those weekly meetings it was suggested that a meeting for special prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and for the edification of one another, should be held on the Sabbath evenings. Three of the number present agreed to conduct it, and a great revival of vital religion amongst us was the result. The prayer meeting thus proposed was begun on a Sabbath evening in August,

1858, at half-past six o'clock, in the house of one of those who agreed to conduct it. The attendance at the first meeting was most encouraging; but other things than the mere number in attendance soon demanded their attention. All of a sudden they found themselves in the midst of a number of people anxiously seeking the Bread of Life. It was only lately they had tasted of it themselves. The novelty of their circumstances, and the responsibility of dealing with souls, lay heavy upon them; but they were led and strengthened by a wisdom and a power not their own. Early were they taught to observe this, and give the praise and the glory to their God and Saviour for it. The knowledge of this meeting spread, and as the attendance of other Christians, of greater experience and equally willing to work, joined in promoting the movement, some even came from Bonhill and Alexandria, Vale of Leven, to help forward the work. A great interest in spiritual things was awakened, and many hearts were stirred to say, "What must I do?" Indeed, it was manifest that several were deeply impressed and seriously anxious about their souls. Souls in peril demand instant attention, and it seemed instinctively to occur to those in charge of the meetings that personal conversion was at once the most direct and effective method of accomplishing this most desirable end; accordingly such as realized the peril of their condition as sinners lost and ready to perish, were entreated to remain after the close of the general meeting. The persons who did so had not seen or heard of second meetings for anxious inquirers before, and as little dreamed that such meetings were spoken of in the Scriptures as having taken place under the immediate direction of Divine inspiration. The result of those inquiry meetings at this early stage of the work showed how opportune and useful they were; one precious soul after another was unloosed and set at liberty—even with the liberty wherewith God makes his people free. The first was a married man who had been the slave of degrading habits. He was arrested by the words, "Remember Lot's Wife," and a few simple remarks on them. Up till this date that man has given ample evidence that he is a tree of the planting of the Lord, bearing fruit to the praise of His

grace. The second prominent case was also a married man—quite a moral man—a member of a church, and, in every other respect, an example to his fellow-workmen. There the big strong man sat weeping like a child. The hammer of the Word, wielded in utmost simplicity, had broken his heart. He, too, has been enabled to maintain his footing on the rock Christ Jesus. Such cases as these at the beginning greatly encouraged the labourers, and created a great interest in the meetings. A growing desire among the people after spiritual things, and an increase among the labourers, induced the committee to think of opening more places for meetings of the same kind. The Abstiners' Hall was proposed. This was thought a very bold step, as it incurred an outlay of money, and at once brought the meetings before the public; however, the hall was taken, and a meeting begun on the Wednesday evenings, and the work was henceforth carried on under the designation of the Union Prayer Meeting.—The attendance at first was small, but gradually increased as the cause took hold of the public mind. The confidence of a few cautious old Christians was now secured. Many alas! stood aloof, apparently cold and indifferent, who might have aided and greatly encouraged us. Many have come and gone to these meetings just according to the outward appearance of the work; if there was a stirring, here they were, if there was a quiet, they were not to be found. Nevertheless, many a precious soul—not less certainly than a hundred from first to last—have in this place been borne on the tide of blessing to the Rock of Salvation. At this time the Wednesday evening meeting was the only one held during the week; indeed, many seemed to think the week-day was not a proper time for such things; many seem to think so yet, although public opinion has greatly changed within the last four years. On the Sabbath evenings there were now four prayer meetings in different parts of the town. These continued gradually to increase in interest and attendance till November, 1859, when through one of the simplest incidents, there began a most decided, deep, wide-spread, long-continued awakening. A blessed work of grace had been going on in Helensburgh for some

time previous. Three or four young men, who had been brought to a knowledge of the truth there, came to Dumbarton, to tell the story of their conversion, full of love to Jesus, and eager to win souls. Their ardent zeal formed a striking contrast to what we had been accustomed—their appeals almost instantaneously found a response in many hearts. Many young men had been attracted to our meetings, into whose souls the light was beginning to dawn. The smouldering fires of conviction immediately burst forth, creating a great stir, causing many to inquire, "What mean these things?" while the anxious inquirers, heedless of what was passing around, in the agony of their souls, implored God to have mercy on them for the Lord Jesus' sake. Not less than thirty or forty, chiefly young men, on that occasion professed a saving change, some of whom had remarkable experience at the time of passing from death unto life. One man, coming out from a meeting, was observed to stagger as if heavily laden, giving utterance to expressions of deep distress of soul. He would have fallen on the street had it not been for the timely aid of a friend behind him. Repeatedly on his way home he had to lean his head on the wall, and at last found relief kneeling in prayer with his friend on the roadside. It is but just here to remark that the Rev. James Smith, minister of the Free Church, at this interesting epoch of the work, countenanced the meetings, and gave what aid his fast declining health would permit. Many of those young men, on account of the fluctuating nature of our trade, have left this place, we hope, to carry the seed of life with them. A goodly number are still amongst us, assisting and conducting our meetings. It was a remarkable providence, however, that so many witnesses for Christ should have been raised up just when they were required for the extension of the work; young, active, and zealous, they scattered themselves over the country. A fresh start was given to the work, and meetings were multiplied to an indefinite number.

—Pride is the characteristic of the children of Adam; humility is the mark of the Second Adam in his children.