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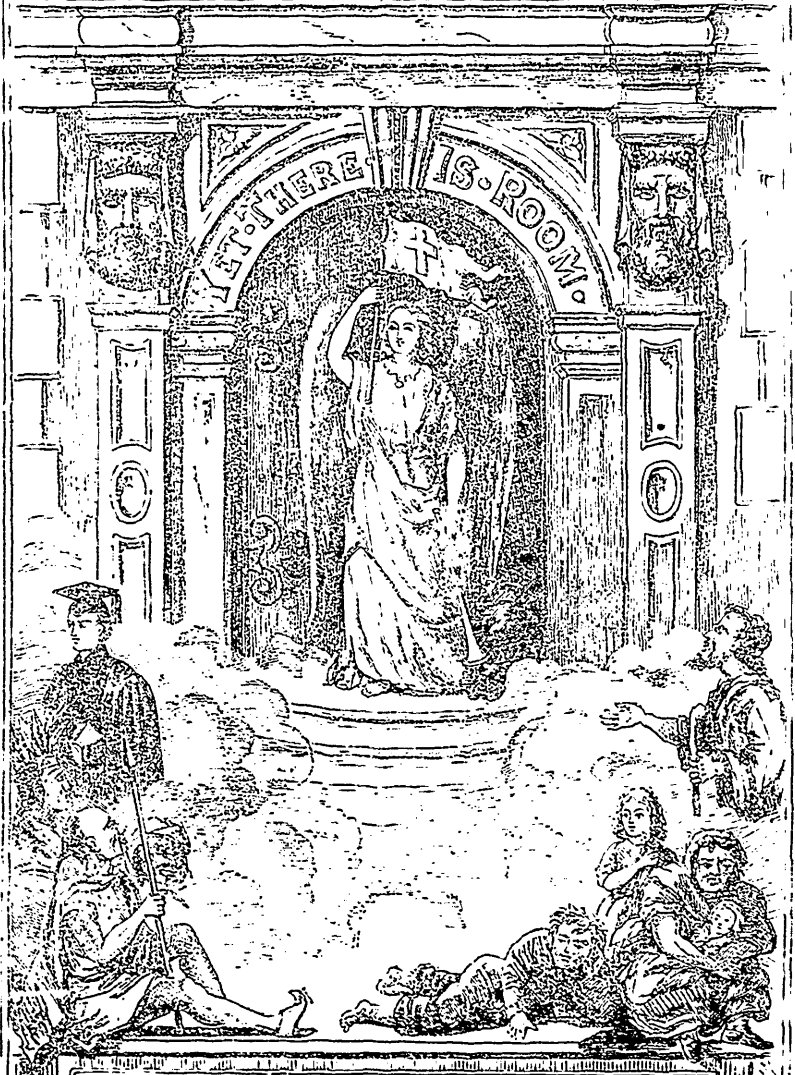
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APRIL, 1866.

THE GOOD NEWS



PUBLISHED BY REV. ROBERT KENNEDY, MONTREAL.

WALKER

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TESTIMONIALS.

ROYAL BELFAST ACADEMICAL INSTITUTION, 20th Feby., 1846.

The Board of Masters of the Royal Belfast Academical Institution feel bound to testify that the Rev. Wm. Hamilton (now at Picton, Canada West,) laboured with so much diligence and success, as the teacher of a private academy in this town, that he was elected Head Master of the English Department in this Institution, that as our colleague he presided over his school with laudable assiduity and unabated interest, that he was a strict disciplinarian and a faithful guardian of the morals of youth, that he was the warm and zealous advocate of sound and Scriptural education, and that he voluntarily resigned his appointment, whilst he was continuing to reap the fruits of his useful labours, in order to engage in the more congenial employment of the sacred ministry.

[Signed,]

JAMES G. MURPHY, LL.D.,

And by all the other Masters.

PHILADELPHIA, July 25th, 1864.

In early life Dr. Hamilton's scholastic training was most accurate. His Academical and Collegiate course developed his fine natural powers, and he stood pre-eminent for his attainments in English and Ancient Classical Literature. He soon therefore, took his place at the head of one of the most important educational Institutions in his native land, where he fully justified the high expectations of his friends. Since his settlement in this country he has established his reputation both in the Colleges of the Western States and in other fields of labour, where he has held office, for wide range of knowledge, accuracy of information, fine capacity for imparting instruction arising from his happy power of analysis, and his great enthusiasm in the Master's or Professor's chair.

WM. BLACKWOOD, D.D.,

Pastor of the Ninth Presbyterian Church,

Philadelphia.

TORONTO, 10th November, 1863.

I have known the Rev. William Hamilton since the year 1847. Previous to this time he was Head Master of the English Department in the Royal Belfast Academical Institution. This lucrative situation he resigned on being appointed missionary to Canada, by the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland. I had frequent and familiar intercourse with him while he was Minister at Picton, in this Province, and formed a very high opinion of his talents as a preacher, and his attainments as a scholar.

WILLIAM GREGG,

Minister of Cooke's Church, Toronto.

From Rev. N. L. Rice, D.D., Pastor of the Presbyterian Church, 5th Avenue, New York, and formerly Professor in the Theological Seminary at Cincinnati.

I have been acquainted with the Rev. Wm. Hamilton for several years, and particularly as an Instructor in the Cincinnati Theological Seminary; and it affords me pleasure to express my high regard for him as a Christian gentleman and as a Classical scholar. I have entire confidence in his qualifications to give satisfaction in any department of instruction in which he may be disposed to engage.

N. L. RICE.

To REV. PROFESSOR HAMILTON, *from the Faculty of Hanover College.*

HANOVER COLLEGE, Indiana, April 7th, 1854.

MY DEAR BROTHER HAMILTON,—The brethren of the faculty with whom you have associated during the past two years, desire me to express their very high regard for you, as a scholar, a gentleman, a teacher, and a Christian Minister.

By order of the Faculty.

THOS. E. THOMAS, D.D.,
President Hanover College.

REV. R. J. BRYCE, LL.D., *Principal of the Belfast Academy,*

BELFAST ACADEMY, March 23, 1839.

MR HAMILTON possesses a remarkable power of inspiring his pupils with his own ardour in pursuit of a favourite study. The amount of work done by the young people composing his higher classes, and the quantity of intellectual improvement attained by them, under the influence of the enthusiasm with which their teacher had imbued them, have often surprised and delighted me.

R. J. BRYCE.

From REV. SAMUEL DAVIDSON, LL.D., *Author of several important works on Biblical Literature.*

BELFAST, February 12, 1839.

I have long been acquainted with the REV. WILLIAM HAMILTON. He entered College with me, and we were in several of the classes together. Since the time he finished his Collegiate course, I have not ceased to be interested in his welfare and advancement. He is an able and successful instructor of youth. His academic career was distinguished by his eminence in written composition, and by his superiority in elocution. He has had much experience in teaching, and he takes delight in the employment which he seems to have selected as the business of his life. Having the happy art of arresting the attention and engaging the affections of his pupils, he succeeds in impressing on their minds those lessons which he wishes to communicate.

SAMUEL DAVIDSON.

From REV. ROBERT WILSON, D.D., *Professor of Biblical Criticism in the Theological Seminary, Belfast.*

Leaving others to testify to the general matters which go to make up Mr. HAMILTON'S undoubted competency, I would direct attention to one point, as, in my opinion, especially worthy of consideration. Having resided for some time under the same roof with him, I think I know the secret of his success in the education of youth—it is simply this:—He is one of the most devoted and enthusiastic teachers I have ever known. He is gifted with a rare facility of throwing his whole heart into his teachings. I remember having been particularly struck with the incessant and warm activity of his mind, during what many would have considered hours of leisure and recreation, in forming new plans for awakening the interest, and gaining or securing the attention of his pupils. Of a teacher so qualified and with such untiring ardour in his profession, I would express my firm conviction, that wherever he labours, he must be successful.

ROBERT WILSON.

THE DEVIL'S VOLUNTEERS.

BY REV. W. B. CLARK, QUEBEC.

"Doth Job serve God for naught?" was the charge which the accuser of the brethren insinuated against that good man. But the event disproved the charge, and showed that it was a malignant calumny. It was true that God had not allowed Job to serve him for naught; but it was not true that, in his service of Him, he had been actuated exclusively by a low, selfish regard to the *advantages* of piety. These are not to be overlooked. God does not ask us to overlook them. HE NEVER ALLOWS HIS PEOPLE TO SERVE HIM FOR NAUGHT.

It is to him that we are indebted for everything which we possess, and, therefore, he has amply paid us beforehand for everything which we may do for him; but still, for all that, he pays us for every piece of work we do for him. He will not suffer himself to be a debtor to any of his creatures, and every time we do a special job for God He will give us ample payment, in one way or other. By some turn of His providence, which the wise and observant may understand, He will put us in the way of obtaining abundant blessings. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come." And if we look around us in the world, we will generally see the blessing of God abiding upon His people. We do not say that this is always the case, for pious people may be deficient in the energy and vigor which are necessary to success in life; and as God works by general laws, if we do not conform to them we must suffer the consequences.— But we will go farther than this, and say, that GOD PAYS EVEN THE UNGODLY WHEN THEY DO HIS WORK, IN SUCH WAGES AS THEY APPRECIATE.

We frequently see the ungodly living in the possession of rank, and position and riches in this world, and in the enjoyment of all the
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comforts which wealth can procure. But this does not arise from the fact that they are ungodly, but from the operation of wise general laws, established by God, which have been taken advantage of. Such men may have inherited these things; or, by their own industry and self-denial, and decision, and talents, they may have acquired them for themselves. They have been well-doing in certain respects, and the ungodly reap the benefit of this just as well as others. When the wicked succeed in life it is not because of their wickedness, but because of their well-doing in certain respects, for God does not withhold from the wicked the reward of their well-doing.

But farther, God sometimes employs the wicked to do His strange work, as he used Nebuchadnezzar to do his work of judgment upon the nations, and paid him for it, too, by the conquest and spoils of these people. Thus, then, ungodly men, in as far as they do well, receive the reward of their well-doing in this world. Just as God makes His sun to shine on the unjust as well as the just, so, when the wicked take advantage of his beneficent laws, and comply with their gracious provisions, they receive the full benefit of them. And when he employs them to do special work of judgment for Him, he pays them for their labor. And it is the wicked whom he generally employs to be his executioners: the righteous he reserves for more dignified and honorable employment.

How different is it with Satan, who charged Job with selfishness in his religion.— Sometimes, indeed, he does not pay his servants for doing his work. But WHEN THE DEVIL PAYS HIS SERVANTS FOR DOING HIS WORK, IT IS WITH COUNTERFEIT MONEY THAT HE PAYS THEM.

All sin may be considered the work of Satan, and those who commit it are helping to
No. 4.

carry out his schemes. They may have no such intention, and laugh at the very idea of this. They may be working each for his own hand, and seeking to accomplish only their own purposes; but for all that, they are doing the devil's work, whether they are conscious of it or not. And pay of a certain sort he gives them too. When men indulge in sin, they are tempted by the pleasure or prospect of gain, which it affords them. And that there is a certain pleasure connected with many kinds of sin, it were useless to deny. And this may be regarded as the pay which the devil gives his servants. But look at it, turn it over in your hand, and consider it, and you will soon see that it is counterfeit coin—a miserable imitation of that pure and permanent happiness which the pursuit of true and rational enjoyment, in a pure and legitimate way, brings along with it.

They seek the sweets of social intercourse, and they are taken in with the revelry and wild excitement of the festive board. Would you have a proof of the counterfeit nature of the enjoyment which Satan palms off upon his victims for happiness? Look at that one, on the morning after a night's revelry; the sick stomach, the aching head, the empty purse, and the reproaching conscience, all testify not only to the counterfeit but destructive nature of the wages in which they have been paid. But we have not done. If the spell is not broken, and the victim rescued, you will see him again, the miserable wreck of what he was, with situation lost, character blasted, means squandered, health broken,—a grief and disgrace to his friends, a worthless waif, without an object and without an aim, a burden to himself, tossed about in wretchedness, till a premature grave buries him out of sight.

It is much the same with all the different kinds of pleasure which Satan provides for those who seek enjoyment in an unlawful way. And those who, with open eyes, rush into decided and unmistakable sin, or who deliberately plan and execute transgression, with a view to the benefits which it promises,—do they really profit by the iniquity? No; it is only counterfeit coin which

they are paid in, which will not pass current in heaven's market place, and purchase true happiness and lasting enjoyment. But Satan not only cheats his dupes with counterfeit money, HE OFTEN SO INFATUATES THEM AS TO INDUCE THEM TO SERVE HIM FOR NAUGHT.

This is the case with profane swearers, who seem to be wicked merely for the sake of being so. It is difficult to see what object they can have in their profanity. If they would reflect for a moment they could hardly fail to see that they have nothing to gain by the practice, and scarce any assignable purpose which they can hope to accomplish by it. The drunkard has a taste to gratify, an insatiable longing to satisfy, a consuming desire for company and excitement, which afford him pleasure at the time; the liar may have something to conceal, which, if discovered, would be injurious to him, and he lies to hide it, or he lies from very vanity, to magnify himself or to accomplish some object which he thinks desirable; and the dishonest man has the hope of gain for a temptation;—but the swearer has nothing to gain by his wickedness, no pleasure to gratify, no enjoyment however short to procure, and no purpose to accomplish. He insults God to His face, and dares him to do His worst, without the poor excuse of having something to gain for his wickedness. "What does Satan pay you for swearing?" said a shrewd man once to a person whom he heard using profane language. "He does not pay me anything," was the reply: "Well," the good man continued, "you work cheap; to lay aside the character of a gentleman, to inflict so much pain on your friends and civil people, and lastly, to risk losing your own precious soul, and all for naught! You certainly do work cheap, very cheap indeed.*

It is probable that there may be some swearers among our readers, and if so, we would remonstrate with them upon their folly in making such sacrifices and running such tremendous risks, and all for naught.—Why not try to get something for your pains? Why not say to your master as Peter did to

* *South Western Baptist.*

his, "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have, therefore?" You have forsaken good breeding, civility, common sense, the fear of God, respect for the good, regard for your friends, and all reasonable prospect of heaven; and surely this is too much to do for nothing. Peter had a noble object in view in forsaking all for Jesus. He expected a chief place in His kingdom. And perhaps you expect a chief place in *your* Master's kingdom. Well, be it so, but remember that this implies also a chief place in hell, a foremost place in the ranks of the damned; and if so, a first place also in agony, and remorse, and everlasting despair.

We hear much of Volunteers now-a-days, of young men who have nobly volunteered to defend their country against foreign aggression, and they are deserving of all praise, and worthy of all encouragement. But Satan has his volunteers too. He tauntingly asked God concerning His servant, "Does Job serve God for naught?"

We have endeavored to show you that the Lord neither asks, nor expects His people to serve him for nought. But Satan both asks or succeeds in getting men to do so: To this class profane swearers belong. They are the Devil's Volunteers. They volunteer their service to him, in his warfare against holiness, purity, and righteousness; and what is more, they not only volunteer, but they serve at their own expense. Miserable men, they may think that their mountain standeth secure; but they are on the losing side; and if they repent not, will perish among the hosts of the ungodly.

With regard to the more advanced class of swearers, there are few who would venture to justify them. The man who can pray God to damn the soul of a neighbour, or even to damn his own soul, is justly regarded as a daring and wicked blasphemer. And the person who expresses a determination to be damned, sooner than submit to some trifling inconvenience, can hardly be regarded as any better. Of what awful folly are these men guilty; what tremendous wickedness do they commit? They profess to believe in dam-

nation, the everlasting perdition of a lost soul, the exposure to the wrath and curse of an Omnipotent God, throughout eter nity; and yet they can make light of this, and invoke it on themselves and others. Very often, they may not mean what they say; but God will not be mocked, and very likely may take them at their word.

But there is another class of swearers, who do not proceed to such excesses as these, who will find men to palliate, if not to justify their conduct. They will swear by God on the most trifling occasions, thus not only profaning his holy name, but virtually calling him to witness their folly, or their anger.

There is another class of men who are not altogether destitute of the fear of God, who have still some sense of propriety, and some regard to public opinion; and though these may not indulge in the grosser kind of profane swearing, yet seek as they think to give emphasis to their expressions by what can be regarded only as an oath. They do not take the great name of God in vain, but they swear by Jupiter, or Jove. If this means anything, it is a small act of idolatry. They know that Jove was the chief of the heathen gods, and to swear by him is virtually to acknowledge their belief in him, and to worship him. Many who use the expression, would shrink from such an idea, and reject all belief in Jove, and disclaim the imputation of worshiping him. What, then, do they mean by appealing to him? Nothing, some may perhaps say. And what is this but to write themselves down as profane fools, by using language to which they attach no meaning?

Others there are who do not appeal to an exploded heathen god, but swear by a dead king. "By George" is not a very uncommon expression among people who profess some regard for religion, who would resent being classed among unbelievers, and would fain take their place among the Lord's people.—They put on their dress, and wish to imitate them; but some breath of anger ruffles them, or some slight breeze of excitement sweeps past and blows aside the skirt of their upper

garment, and Satan's livery appears beneath. Others there are whose Christian character we would not question, but the beauty of whose discipleship is marred by thoughtless expressions to which they do not attach any meaning, but which were originally used by those who meant them for an oath. Such exclamations are, My gracious! my faith! my, my! My what? We would not like to use unkind language in regard to good people, who mean no evil by these senseless expressions; but they give a harsh person ground to say, that the desire to swear was in their hearts, only they wanted courage to give full expression to the oath with their lips.

Swearing has been common in all ages, but this does not make the guilt of it any less.—In its least offensive forms, it was very common among the Jews, and was noticed particularly and condemned by our Saviour. "Swear not at all," said He; "neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great king. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be yea, yea; nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." Here, then, is the command of our Lord and Master, who, though crucified on Calvary, is now reigning in glory, invested with all power in heaven and on earth.—He most emphatically condemns all swearing, and says, "Let your communications be yea, yea; nay, nay."

Reader, will you obey him, and thus show that you believe in him, and love him? Then you will forever cease all swearing. Do you refuse to obey him? Then you must make up your mind to have your portion among his enemies, throughout eternity, in those dismal regions of horror and despair, where the swearer may swear his fill, and hear his oaths mingling among the howlings of despair, and the imprecations of the seduced against their deceivers, and the weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, which will be resounding for ever throughout the dark pit of interminable despair.

SHALL I GO TO THE OPERA?

Charlie A—— is about sixteen years of age. His parents are considered rich. He has attended the best schools, and has every opportunity for improvement and enjoyment that the son of wealthy parents could desire; and Charlie is a Christian. He loves to pray. He has been received into the church as a member, and reads carefully the Bible to learn how a young Christian ought to live. He is really a beautiful example in his daily life for older persons.

This does not make Charlie an unpleasant companion. Everybody seems to love him. He is anxious to make all around him happy. He is full of innocent fun. He enjoys a good round laugh as well as any little gentleman that I know. But he is as true to his conscience and to the Bible as the needle of the compass is to the North Pole.

In a large company of young friends, collected one evening at the residence of a gentleman of wealth, a young lady asked him "if he had been to hear Forrest." She referred to Edwin Forrest, the noted actor, at that time engaged at one of the most popular theatres of the city.

"O no!" said Charlie.

"What! have not heard Forrest?"

"No, never."

"Everybody hears him."

"I have not."

"Why have you not heard him?"

"I do not attend the theatre."

The buzz of conversation ceased around the young lady and Charlie. They were anxious to hear how he would come out of the discussion. They were all his companions, very fashionable young people, attended the same church, many of them, and it was a trying place for the young protestant against the theatre.—But he stood his ground without flinching or blushing. He had a reason for his course, which he was perfectly willing to give.

"You attend the opera sometimes, do you not?" his elegantly dressed and beautiful questioner continued.

"Never!" was the unhesitating answer.

"What objection have you to going? Church members go," continued the

young lady, determined not to give over her catechism until she had drawn Charlie into close quarters.

Now, Charlie might have very naturally and properly answered, "My parents do not approve of my going," as a young person would if he had no other reason to offer. But Charlie did his own thinking, and worked out the conclusion in his own mind from what he had seen with his own eyes. He might have said that he had heard that the influence of such places was anything but good; that many young persons were ruined by them; that very vile persons, as well as those that were respectable, attended them; that the character of play-actors was said to be very bad; that many of the popular plays and operas were decidedly immoral; all this he might have said, but he had not been over this in his own mind. But he did say this, and some older persons heard him, and were struck with his answer:

"I have noticed this," said Charlie, "that the best persons I know—the truest Christians—those that are doing the most good, and are the most active in the religious services—never attend such places. I have also noticed that those that do go are not fond of prayer-meetings, and are not those found labouring in the Sunday-school, and ready for every good work.—This is the reason why I have preferred not to attend the theatre and opera.

It was simply and honestly spoken, and there was not a word to be said in opposition to it. There was not one, even of that gay company, but knew this to be true. And there was not one of them that did not respect the manly stand taken by Charlie, and approve his decisions in their hearts, although few of them might have the courage or piety to follow his example.

It has never been written that one person has been made more generous, more truthful, more beloved of God and man, by attending these places of amusement; but it has been recorded that hundreds have fallen into habits of dishonesty, prodigality, and intemperance by yielding to the seductive influence of the theatre. One may be equally as cheerful, as eloquent of speech, as fond of music, certainly as lovely and pious, without ever entering

these places of amusement, which good men, from the beginning of them, have looked upon as only hurtful.—*Zion's Herald.*

THE ISLES WAITING FOR GOD'S LAW.

The wonderful tidings have been received that the natives of the Lagoon islands, a group of nine islands about 800 miles from the Navigator's group, containing a population of over 3,500, have renounced paganism, swept away every vestige of idolatry, and are anxious for the gospel. Ten years ago, the natives of one island, becoming weary of paganism, followed the advice of the master of a trading vessel who visited the islands, and burned their idols, and for ten years have been waiting for a guide to teach them the way of God more perfectly. A native Samoan missionary and his wife are now there, being able to use the Samoan Scriptures and books, the language being similar. On another group, about 60 miles distant, where the people had destroyed their idols about the same time, the chief told the Samoan preacher that they were all in darkness, waiting for some one to teach them. A teacher was left among them, and in two days seventeen had acquired the alphabet, and in a fortnight between twenty and thirty could read. On another group, the people hearing what had been done, destroyed their gods, renounced idolatry, and for years have kept the Sabbath and public worship in the neat and clean chapel. It is a sad and shameful fact, that the inhabitants of two of those islands were ensnared into slavery by the desire to know about the true God. The infamous Peruvian slavers took advantage of their wishes, and coming with two vessels, invited the people to go on board that they might be taken where they would be taught about God and religion, and afterwards be brought back to their homes. So great was their eagerness to be taught about God, that they flocked on board the ships, those who could not obtain passage in the ships' boats going in their canoes, and even swimming to the vessels, and they were thus enticed away from their peaceful homes.

"OH, NOT MYSELF; NOT ME!"

"There never was such affliction as mine," said a poor sufferer, restlessly tossing in her bed in one of the wards of an hospital. "I don't think there ever was such racking pain.

"Once," was faintly uttered from the next bed.

The first speaker paused for a moment; and then, in a still more impatient tone, resumed her complaint.

"Nobody knows what I pass through. Nobody ever suffered more pain."

"Once," was again whispered from the same direction.

"I take it you mean yourself, poor soul! but"—

"Oh, not myself; not me!" exclaimed the other; and her pale face flushed up to the very temples, as if some wrong had been offered not to herself, but to another.

She spoke with such earnestness that her restless companion lay still for several seconds, and gazed intently on her face.—It was a young face scarcely more than nineteen, and, not very long ago, it had been round and ruddy. But the cheeks now wan, were sunken, and the parched lips were drawn back from the mouth, as if by pain. Yet there dwelt an extraordinary sweetness in the clear grey eyes, and a refinement on the placid brow, such as can only be imparted by a heart-acquaintance with him who is "*full of grace and truth.*"

"Oh, not myself; not me!" she repeated, deprecatingly.

There was a short pause; and then the following words, uttered in the same low key, slowly and solemnly broke the midnight silence of the place,—

"*And when they had platted a crown of thorns they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand, and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him saying, Hail King of the Jews! And they spit upon him and took the reed, and smote him upon the head. . . . And when they were come to a place called Golgotha, they gave him vinegar to drink, mingled with gall. And then crucified him. . . . And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads. . . . And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with*

a loud voice, saying, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

The voice ceased, and for several minutes not a syllable was spoken. The night nurse rose from her chair by the fire, and mechanically handed a cup of barley-water, flavoured with lemon-juice and sugar, to the lips of both sufferers.

"Thank you, nurse," said the last speaker. "They gave him gall for his meat; and in his thirst they gave him vinegar to drink."

"She is talking about Jesus Christ," said the other woman, already beginning to toss less restlessly from side to side.—"But," added she, "talking about his sufferings can't mend ours—at least not mine."

"But it lightens hers," said the nurse. "I wonder how."

"Hush!"

And the gentle voice a gain took up the strain:

"Surely he had borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows. . . . He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

"Healed! That's a blessed word. I wish I were healed," sighed the restless invalid.

The two fellow-sufferers of whom we are speaking had never met till they found themselves side by side in the Infirmary. Barbara, the elder, had been a servant in a wealthy family, where she had no spiritual advantages, and few aspirations beyond "the life that now is." She was bound to her employers by no band except good service on the one side, and liberal wages on the other. So that, when her health gave way beneath a disabling and painful malady, it was no wonder that her placed was soon filled by a more profitable servant, and that Barbara was consigned to the refuge for the sick poor.

Lucy Fletcher, the youngest of the two, had become its inmate in consequence of a fall down the trap-door of a warehouse, left carelessly insecure. She knew that her injuries were considered hopeless; and that, if she ever left the friendly walls of the hospital, it would be as a life-long cripple.

She had been brought up in the country, in one of the green dales of Derbyshire; and when she first came to the crowded city, her rosy cheeks were a sort of marble in the factory where she worked—a sight quite pleasant for the eye to rest upon amidst the dust and gloom of the cotton mill. The wages she earned seemed absolute wealth to the frugal country girl, until she found that life in ill-ventilated rooms requires a diet far more nourishing and costly than amidst the pure breezes of the country.

But though Lucy soon lost her roses and buoyant step, yet she found in the city wilderness a new treasure—a living well of water—which made amends for all. Yes; she had been led to the knowledge of Him of whom she had often dimly read in the law and the prophets, but of whom she never till now beheld as “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”

It was wonderful to mark how rapidly she henceforth grew in the knowledge of God’s word. Having found Jesus, she had found the one master key which unlocks the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. One by one these hidden stores poured forth their riches into the bosom of the young disciple; and her retentive memory easily treasured up what her simple faith received.

Ah, she little knew how soon the time would come when the lessons of faith must be put into practice, and when she would be called to take up her heavy cross and bear it after Jesus. Lucy knew well that her own cross could never work atonement for sin, or bring her near to God.

There is but one access unto God, and this is Jesus. But she found that, while patiently bearing her appointed cross, and steadfastly looking unto His, her own became wonderfully light, and his wonderfully precious.

But it is time to return to the night scene. “Are you asleep, young woman?” asked Barbara of her fellow invalid.

“No, ma’am.”

“What, then, makes you able to lie so quiet?”

“I was thinking about those dear women in the Gospel who loved Jesus. Two of the evangelists say that they stood

‘*afar off*,’ watching their dying Lord.—But John says that they ‘stood by the cross of Jesus,’ so close that they could hear what he said, and could talk with him.—Now we are sure both accounts are quite true—every word. And so I have been thinking that at first they stood at a distance, because, perhaps, they were afraid of the cruel mockers and murderers; and partly, perhaps, because they could hardly bear to look upon the agonies of the blessed Master whom they so loved—(One of them was his mother, you know.)

“But true love always is for drawing near; and so I think they grew less and less fearful, and more and more loving; and got nearer—nearer—nearer to Jesus, till at last they stood by the cross, and heard his dying words. And I was thinking that both you and I should try to draw near and nearer to the dying Saviour—near and nearer to the blood of sprinkling.

“We can’t do so just in the same way as those holy women who could see him with their eyes and hear him with their ears; but we can draw nigh to him in our hearts and speak to him in our prayers, and hear him speak to us in his word and by his Spirit; and we can look in faith upon the precious blood, and ask thd Lord to sprinkle it upon our hearts. You cannot think, till you try, how light all our crosses become in the shadow of the cross of Christ.”

“I can’t draw nigh. I don’t know how to go,” said Barbara, with the expression of quite a new anxiety on her troubled countenance.

“Then we will ask him to draw nigh to us,” said Lucy. “You know,” she continued, “that the same Jesus who suffered death on the cross is the risen Lord of life, at the Father’s right hand, pleading for you and for me.”

“For me?”

“Yes, sure; for you.”

Lucy Fletcher did not leave the hospital “a helpless cripple,” as the doctors had predicted; but a glorified, disembodied, ecstatic spirit, swelling the song of the redeemed around the throne of God.

The one woman was taken and the other left.

Barbara was restored to health, and obtained a situation in a well-ordered Christian family.

She has never forgotten the night scene in the Infirmary; and is now one of those who in the face of many difficulties from within, and trials from without, steadily endeavor to live nearer and nearer to the cross of Christ. In a word, she is now a new creature in Christ Jesus—born again from on high.

Dear Reader, are you saved? Have you found salvation, and have your sins been put away by Jesus Christ? If not, God in heaven, looking on the blood of His Son, is asking you, "Why will ye die?" Jesus, exalted to the right hand of the Father, is asking you, "Why will ye die?" The Holy Spirit is asking you, "Why ye die?"

And myriads of soul in heaven, once as guilty and as hard as you, but now washed in the blood of Christ, and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, are asking you, "Why will ye die?"

DR. MILLER'S DUCK STORY.

The late Dr. Miller, of Princeton, as all his students will remember, abounded in anecdotes, which he related to his classes from year to year, to illustrate the points made in his lectures. One of them occurs to us, just now, as specially applicable to the new converts which have recently come into the churches—within the bounds of our circulation:—A celebrated judge in Virginia was, in his earlier years, skeptical as to the truth of the Bible, and especially as to the reality of experimental religion. He had a favorite servant who accompanied him in his travels. As they passed from court to court, they frequently conversed on the subject of religion, the servant, Harry, venturing at times to remonstrate with his master against his infidelity. As the judge had confidence in Harry's honesty and sincerity, he asked him a great many questions as to how he felt and what he thought on various points. Amongst other things Harry told his master that he was often very sorely tempted and tried by the devil. The judge asked Harry to explain to him how it happened that the devil attacked him (Harry), who was so

pious a man, so sorely, whilst he allowed himself, who was an infidel and a sinner, to pass unnoticed and untempted. Harry asked, "Are you right sure, master, that he does let you pass without troubling you?" "Certainly I am," replied the judge; "I have no dealings with him at all. I do not even so much as know that there is any such being in existence as the devil. If there is any such being he never troubles me." "Well," said Harry, "I know that there is a devil, and that he tries me sorely at times." A day or two afterwards, when the judge had gotten through his docket, he concluded to go on a hunt for wild ducks on one of the streams which lay across his road homeward. Harry accompanied him. As they approached the river they espied a flock of ducks quietly floating on its surface. The judge stealthily crept up the bank and fired upon them, killing two or three and wounding as many others. He at once threw down his gun and made strenuous efforts with the aid of clubs and stones, to secure the wounded ducks, whilst he permitted the dead ones to float on, for the time, unnoticed by him. Harry, as he sat on the seat of the carriage, watched his master's movements with deep interest, and when he returned, said to him: "Massa, whilst you was a splashin' in de water after dem wounded ducks, and lettin' de dead ones float on, it jist come into my mind, why it is dat de debil troubles me so much, whilst he lets you alone. You are like de dead ducks; he's sure he's got you safe. I'm like de wounded ones, trying to git away from him, and he's afraid I'll do it, so he makes all de fuss after me and jist lets you float on down de stream. He knows he can git you any time; but he knows it now or never wid me. If you were to begin to flutter a little and show signs like you were agoink to git away from him, he would make jist as big a splashin' after you as he does after me."

The illustration struck the learned judge with great force, and led him to reinvestigate the grounds of his skepticism, and, through Harry's instrumentality, he was fully brought to sit with him at the feet of Jesus and to learn of him. The illustration is a homely one, but it sets forth a great truth in the experiences of those

who set out in the Christian course. They must expect to be assailed by Satan as they never were before. He has tried so long, and had so much to do with men, that he is now an adept in devising means to ruin them, and make them as miserable and degraded as himself. Young Christians, therefore, should not think it strange concerning the fiery trials which are to try them, as though some strange thing had happened to them, when they are assailed in new, and to them, hitherto unknown methods of assault. As long as the devil feels that sinners are safe, and that he is sure to get them at last, he allows them to float on quietly upon an unruffled current; but the moment they attempt to throw off his yoke, and to assert their independence of him, they must expect his wrath to wax exceeding hot, and his assaults to fall thick and fast upon their heads. They should not be ignorant of his devices. He goes about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.—*Presbyterian Herald.*

JOHN THE GRAVEDIGGER.

Mr. Gray had not long been minister of the parish till he noticed the odd practice of the gravedigger; and one day, when he came upon John smoothing and trimming the lonely bed of a child which had been buried a few days before, he asked why he was so particular in dressing and heaping the graves of infants. John paused for a moment at his work, and looking up, not at the minister, but at the sky, said, 'Of such is the kingdom of heaven.'

'And on this account you tend and adorn them with so much care?' remarked the minister, who was greatly struck with the reply.

'Surely, sir,' answered John, 'I canna make over braw and fine the bed-covering o' a little innocent sleeper that is waitin' there till it is God's time to wauken it, and cover it with white robes, and waft it away to glory. Where sic grandeur is awaitin' it yonder, it's fit it should be decked oot here. I think the Saviour will like to see white clover spread abune it; dae ye no think sae tae, sir?'

'But why not thus cover larger graves?'

asked the minister, hardly able to suppress his emotions. 'The dust of all his saints is precious in the Saviour's sight.'

'Very true, sir,' responded John with great solemnity; 'but I canna be sure wha are his saints, and wha are no. I hope there are many o' them lyin' in this kirkyard; but it would be great presumption in me to mark them oot. There are some that I'm gey sure aboot, and I keep their graves, as nate and snod as I can, and plant a bit floure here and there, as a sign of my hope; but daurna gie them the white shirt,' referring to the white clover. 'It's clean different, though, wi' the bairns.'

GOD RULES.

That God rules in the affairs of men is as certain as any truth of physical science. On the great moving power which is from the beginning, hangs the world of the senses and the world of thought and action. Eternal wisdom marshals the great procession of the nations, working in patient continuity through the ages, never halting and never abrupt, encompassing all events in its oversight, and ever effecting its will, though mortals may slumber in apathy, or oppose with madness. Kings are lifted up or thrown down, nations come and go, republics flourish and wither, dynasties pass away like a tale that is told; but nothing is by chance, though men in their ignorance of causes may think so. The deeds of time are governed, as well as judged, by the degrees of eternity. The caprice of fleeting existences bends to the immovable omnipresent which plants its foot on all the centuries and has neither change of purpose nor repose. Sometimes, like a messenger through the thick darkness of night, it steps along mysterious ways; but when the hour strikes for a people or for mankind to pass into a new form of being, unseen hands draw the bolts from the gates of futurity; an all-subduing influence prepares the mind of men for the coming revolution; those who plan resistance find themselves in conflict with the will of Providence, rather than with human devices; and all hearts and all understandings, most of all the opinions and influences of the unwilling, are wonderfully attracted and compelled to bear forward the

change which becomes more an obedience to the law of universal nature, than submission to the arbitrament of man.—*Bancroft*.

DECAY OF SPIRITUAL STRENGTH.

HOSEA VII. 9.

This relates to Ephraim, or the kingdom of Israel. Their political strength, the power of the nation, was wasted by intercourse with the surrounding idolatrous nations, and by learning their ways. "Ephraim, he hath mixed himself among the people; Ephraim is a cake not turned." He is neither godly nor worldly, but a kind of mixture of both, and so God was provoked; judgment followed judgment till they were swept out of their land.

It is by a similar process that the strength of God's people is weakened still. We had, a few years ago, a season of blessed revival. The north wind and south wind blew over the garden, and the spices flowed out. The Lord gave a plentiful rain, and confirmed his heritage when it was weary. It was spring and summer in our land. The winter was past, and the rain was over and gone; the flowers appeared upon the earth, and the time of the singing of birds was come. It was so natural then to say to the Lord, "Come, my Beloved, let us go forth into the fields; let us lodge in the villages; let us see how the vine buds and the pomegranate flourishes." The strength, courage, and hopefulness of God's people were all renewed. They were aggressive and enterprising, they broke forth on the right hand and on the left, and it seemed as if they would carry all before them.

But a change has certainly come over us. No one that has spiritual perception and sensibility but must feel and acknowledge this. We have now few of those honoured men from whom there then flowed those rivers of living water which scooped out channels for themselves, and then filled them from bank to brae. We have still the men, we have still the channels, but where are the living waters? There is still much of human, but little of *divine* working. Why is this? Perhaps we have here the explanation. We did not watch, we did not pray, we did

not keep ourselves that that wicked one should not touch us. The world came back to us, and we went back to the world, and so it has become true of us as it was of Ephraim, "Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not."

What is spiritual strength? It is a supernatural thing. We have it not by nature. The flesh is weak. We have no sufficiency in ourselves so much as to think anything that is good. Whence, then, comes this strength? It is God's gift. He has laid it up for us in Christ, and we receive it by faith. When we believe on Christ, we begin to have strength. Hence it is said, "full of faith," and so full of power. When Peter healed the lame man at the temple gate, he said, "Why look ye on us, as though by our own power or holiness we have made this man to walk? The name of Jesus, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong." The beginning and grand channel of spiritual strength is faith in Christ. Hence He says, "Without Me ye can do nothing."

But again: "The joy of the Lord is your strength." The sense of forgiveness and acceptance, and the light of God's countenance, exhilarate the spirit, and make a man buoyant and energetic. These things enlarge the heart, and make us run in God's ways with delight. Difficult duties are easy and trials light when we can say, "God is my Friend; He is on my side; He will light my candle; He will enlarge my steps; by Him I shall break through a troop, and overleap a wall."

And again: the unction of the Holy Ghost is strength. The Lord said to his disciples, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."

What a change was thus produced! They became new men—bold, wise, persevering, successful. But this was true not of the apostles only; it applied to all the converts. Through the power of the Holy Ghost they became united, disinterested, devoted, happy. Was not that a strong church? They did the work of God, and the enemy for a time drew back in alarm. The Comforter had come, and He convinced the world of sin, and righteousness, and judgment. But this is still true—full of the Holy Ghost, and so full

of power. When this hand of the Lord is upon us, we are raised above ourselves, and become new sharp threshing instruments, having teeth.

But again: a firm hold of eternal things is a source of strength. The man who feels the powers of the world to come can bid defiance to the temptations of the god of this world. He will say, "I have something better than all that you can offer." The patriarchs looked not back to the country they had left, because they saw before them a city which hath foundations.

Light esteem of earthly things, crucifixion to the world, this also is strength. The man who says, "I count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord," who says, "He who drinketh of this water shall thirst again," is a strong man. He sees the prosperity of the wicked, but he does not envy them; he does not fret, for he sees that it is a dream, a fashion that passes away. He says, "Behold, Thou hast set them in slippery places; how are they consumed as in a moment."

Prayer, again, is a source of strength. The praying man is strong. He is careful for nothing; he casts his burden on the Lord, and the peace of God fills his heart. He commits his way to God, and is saved from hesitation and perplexity. He waits upon the Lord, and renews his strength. He asks, and receives all he needs, for prayer is the key of the divine treasury, and he knows its value, and never lets it rust.

Once more: using the strength we have is the way to get more. "To him that hath shall be given." Exercise increases spiritual as well as natural strength. Natural strength, indeed, after a time, decays and comes to nought, but spiritual strength is linked to an exhaustless fountain; and so, even in old age, the good man is still fat and full of sap.

Such are some of the sources of spiritual strength. Let us now see some of the causes of its decay. "Strangers have devoured his strength." Who are these? All unconverted, unregenerate men are strangers to the people of God. They are of a different family; children of the wicked one. They are of a different country; they belong to this world. They are of a different language; they speak the

words of earth. They have different aims; they seek selfish, personal aggrandisement. They have different principles; they have not the fear of God. They have different feelings; they do not hate sin. They have a different destiny; they are on the way to ruin. These are strangers; and yet, people of God, you are necessarily, unavoidably, constantly mingling and in contact with them, at home and abroad, in the relationships, intercourse, and business of life. Yet no harm would ensue if you constantly remembered and realized the essential difference between you and them. If you said to yourself, when going into their company, "Now I am entering into an unhealthy atmosphere, a spiritual malaria, where God and eternity are forgotten, and time and earth are all; let me therefore be ever on my guard, watchful, self-possessed, and let me even in the midst of talk or business ever and anon lift up my heart for a moment to hold communion with my father, and breathe the pure, healthy air of my eternal home."

But in addition to these precautions for your personal safety, you are bound to act faithfully and honestly towards those with whom you thus meet. You should be to them as a light, seeking to warn, instruct, reprove, and win them to the Lord. If your speech be always with grace, seasoned with the salt of truth; if your conversation be like a stream, which flowing over beds of gold, leaves everywhere a rich deposit; and if, when you cannot stem or divert the torrent of idle, unprofitable talk, you show your disapproval by silence or withdrawal;—then instead of being harmed, you will do good; and the ignorant whom you have instructed, the troubled whom you have comforted, the erring whom you have arrested, will be daily rising up to call you blessed. Oh, what a harvest-field, what a rich mine, is all around you! Perhaps out of every ten persons you meet in ordinary life, eight or nine are still in the way to ruin, and you may be the means of winning them, and so inheriting the promise, "They who turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever." But instead of this, do you not too often forget the essential and (if grace pre-

vent not) the eternal difference between yourselves and the world around? You know in your heart that they are in danger; that in a little while they will themselves see and acknowledge it; that when they see you in the kingdom of heaven, and they themselves cast out, then they will bitterly reproach you for your cowardice and unfaithfulness in suffering them to perish unwarned. But notwithstanding all this, for fear of offering or contravening the customs of worldly society, you stifle your convictions, keep truth in abeyance, and suffer not your light to shine forth. How hardening is this, how grieving to the Holy Ghost! But more: you imbibe their Spirit, you join in their conversation, and contribute your share of folly and joke, to amuse and pass the time. You conform to their fashions; you are pleased with their approbation; you dread their ridicule or censure; you are carried away by their aims; perhaps you become as eager as any in the competition for earthly things. Wealth, perhaps, flows in upon you, and men praise you because you are doing well for yourself; but your heart is withdrawn from God, and then, like Samson, your strength departs from you.

But there are strangers of the library. This is a reading age. What multitudes of books are constantly pouring forth! But the majority are from the world, and for the world. Men of strong but unscrupulous minds are writing with a determinate design to poison the minds of their fellow-men, and make them like themselves. Or if no such design be entertained, yet their productions cannot rise higher than the source from which they flow, and so their tendency must be to lower and carnalize the spirit. These writings meet you everywhere. How are you acting in reverence to them? Do you realize the danger? Do you watch against it? or do you yield to the fascination, and become darkened in your minds and deadened in your souls?

But there are strangers of the heart. We are ever thinking, and we know what is the natural staple of our reveries. Long ago it was divinely testified that "all the imaginations of the thoughts of our hearts are only evil, and that continually." How

many vain thoughts, idle fears, foolish hopes, doubts, and questionings, spring up in the course of a single day! How do you deal with them? They are strangers; do you reject them and bid them begone? Alas! people who would not read a printed novel or romance, have many a novel and romance passing in their own minds. Beware, beware! There is a strange unconsciousness when spiritual strength is departing. Ephraim knew not of his loss; yea, grew hairs were here and there upon him and he knew it not. Such ignorance often prepares the way for some sad fall. Samson wist not that his strength was departed from him, and so he fell into the hands of his enemies. He might have known, he should have known, for he was in evil ways, but he wist not, and so the foe easily overcame him. Child of God, beware of the grey hairs! Others see them, but you see them not. It is a gradual decay; there is little change from day to day. But the strength is constantly leaking out, and the supply is failing.

"Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward."—*The Revival.*

YOU CANNOT.

You cannot. Nothing can be more true. In your own strength and power you can no more give up sin, turn to God, believe in Jesus Christ, and get through Him sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, than these Israelites, of whom we have read, could have gone up unaided against the inhabitants of Canaan, and taken possession of their land. *You cannot*: but it is *because you cannot*, that God has given you a Saviour to do for you and in you, what it is so true you *cannot* do for yourself.

The Lord Jesus Christ and Satan (for Satan can speak the truth if it suits him) both teach this truth: "*you cannot.*" A man, by the grace of God, has anxious moments about eternity, and feels a desire to be a Christian. The very first suggestion of the devil to such a one is—There are circumstances in your case that make the thing impossible: "**YOU CANNOT.**" Now, so far he tells the truth; and the Lord

Jesus Christ said exactly the same thing to his disciples, when he said—"Without me, you can do nothing." But it is this "WITHOUT ME" that makes all the difference; and it is because we can do nothing that God has given us Jesus Christ. The very sinner who can do nothing, and who knows nothing until he knows and says—"I can do nothing," is commanded to believe, on the warrant of God's Word, that he "can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth him." (Phil. iv. 13).

The real ruin of the Israelites was that they forgot God their Saviour, and made their calculations *without Him*. They forgot God when they said and believed that they could not get into the promised land; and that man forgets God who says and believes that HE CANNOT BE A CHRISTIAN. The faith of both is the faith of the unbeliever, and they who hold it must perish. Has not God promised to save you, if you will go to him? Has he not promised to forgive you all your sins for Christ's sake? Has he not promised to sanctify you for Christ's sake? Has he not promised that he will make Christ unto you "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption?" Has he not told you that if you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ you shall be saved? Has he not said that if you do, he will never leave you, nor forsake you? Has he not told you that it was because you were lost—for that very reason; because you had destroyed yourself, but could not save yourself—that God was manifest in the flesh, in order that he might die *in the stead of sinners*; and so, in virtue of what he had done, be able to save to the uttermost them that come to God by him? Has he not told you all this, and much more to the same effect, in his Word? YOU KNOW HE HAS. Then refuse to believe it, and say there is no hope for you; refuse to believe it, and to go up in strength of it, against every sin and every difficulty, and you are guilty of the identical sin of which these Israelites were guilty, and for which God swore in his wrath that they should never enter into his rest. Nothing else could have destroyed them. *Nothing else can destroy you.—"Ourselves," by Mr. Brownlow North.*

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

THE WHITE WATER-LILY.

At the bottom of a mild, dark muddy lake, there lay a very small root. The mud covered it, the fish swam over it, the frogs hid under it, and once a great moose actually trod on it.

'O dear!' said the little root, talking to itself, 'how dark and lonesome it is down here! Hardly a ray of light comes to me. They tell me it is light and beautiful up above me, and there is a lovely sky there; but the heavy waters lie on me, and press me down. Nobody ever thinks of me, or ever knows that I live. I am a poor useless thing. I can't communicate with any one—can't do good to any one. I might as well not be!

The snow covered the earth and filled the forest, and the ice covered the lake, and there lay the little root, coiled up in its loneliness. But when the spring had returned, and the snows were gone, and the ice had melted, and the birds had come, and the forest had put on its mantle of green, the little root felt that the water was warmer, and she peeped up with one eye, and then she nestled and felt a strong desire to see the light. So she shot up a long, smooth, beautiful stem, till it reached the top of the lake. But when she attempted to draw it in again, she found it would not come. But instead of that, a little bud grew on the end of the stem. She called, but the bud gave no answer; it only swelled, and grew larger and larger; and the rains fell on it, and the sun and the moon seemed to smile on it and cheer it, till at last it burst open, full of joy, and found itself the white, sweet, pure water-lily! Its leaves were of the purest white; while in its centre was a golden spot, covered with down. It lay upon the top of the water, and basked in the sun—a most beautiful object! The root fed it, and felt that it was really herself, though in a new form. The humming-bird passed over it, and thrust in its little bill to suck its sweetness. The air all around was made sweet by its fragrance. Still it felt that it was of no use in the world, and wished it could do something to make others happy.

At length the splashing of oars was heard, and the little lily turned round to see what it meant. Just then she heard

the voice of a little boy in the boat saying—
‘Oh, father; what a beautiful lily! Do let me get it!’

Then the boat turned slowly towards it, and the little boy put out his hand and seized it. The long stem broke off near the root, and the child held it in his hand. It seemed the fairest, sweetest thing he ever saw.

‘Now, what will you do with it?’ asked the father.

‘I’ll look at it and smell it.’

‘Is there nobody else that would like to see it and smell it?’

‘I don’t know, sir. Oh! yes, now I think. Would not Jane Irving love to have it?’

‘I think she would.’

That afternoon poor Jane Irving, who lived in the cottage just under the maple-trees, lay on her sick-bed alone. She was a poor, motherless child. She knew she had the consumption, and must die. She was thinking about the dark, cold grave, and wondering how Christ could ever open it and make her come out. A tear stood on each eye, just as the little boy came to her bedside with the white water-lily.

‘See here, Jane; I got that away out in the lake, and brought it for you. I thought you would like it.’

‘Thank you, thank you! It is indeed very beautiful and very sweet. What a long stem! Where did it grow?’

‘It grew out of the mud in the bottom of the lake; and this long stem—as long as a man—shows how far down it grew. It was all alone—not another one to be seen. I am glad you like it; but I must go’—and away ran the little boy.

Jane held the pure, white flower in her hand: and the good Spirit seemed to whisper in her heart, ‘Jane, Jane, don’t you see what God can do? Don’t you see that out of dark, foul mud, He can bring out a thing more beautiful than the garments of a queen, and as pure as an angel’s wing? and can’t He also from the dark grave raise up your body pure and beautiful and glorious? Can you doubt it?’ And then a voice seemed to say, ‘I am the Resurrection and the Life;’ and the heart of the poor child was filled with faith, and the angel of hope wiped away her tears, and the little lily preached of

peace and mercy. When it withered, she thanked God that nothing need be useless.
—*Rev. John Todd, D.D.*

SHREW D RETORTS.

A preacher of the gospel, on being introduced to a skeptic, with the explanation that the man was a skeptic, in the midst of an extended circle of friends, said to him, “I suppose, then, you do not believe anything.” “O yes,” replied the skeptic, “I do believe many things.” “So will you then,” said the preacher, “be so good as to tell us what you believe?” The skeptic replied, “I do not believe that old story of the Bible about Cain obtaining a wife in the land of Nod, where there was no body living.” Never mind what you *don’t* believe,” said the preacher, “no doubt there is much of that; but tell us what you *do* believe.” The skeptic rallied and said, “Well, I will tell you; I don’t believe the account given by Moses, that God commanded the Midianites to be destroyed.” “I am not inquiring for what you *don’t* believe, but what you *do* believe.” Tell us what you do believe. Recovering himself a little, and clearing up his voice, he made a desperate effort, saying, “I don’t believe that old fable of the Bible, that God commanded the Canaanites to be destroyed.” His belief was all *disbelief*. It commences all the time with “*I don’t believe.*”

A Romanist once said to a Christian, “You Protestants could not prove your Bible if it were not for the Holy Catholic Church, and her great men.” “True,” said the Christian, “for the Bible predicted that there would be just such an apostate church and priesthood, and here you are, just as the Bible said.”

After hearing a discourse, in which much was said by the preacher about God, a skeptic said to him, “What is this God about whom you have been saying so much?” The preacher replied, “God is a spirit.” The skeptic fiercely followed up, “What is a spirit?” The preacher quickly turned on him, and inquired, “What is a cornstalk?” “Why—why—why, it is a cornstalk.” “Yes, sir,” replied the preacher, “a spirit is a spirit, and if you cannot tell what a cornstalk is, which you have seen thousands of times,

and know has an existence, why do you ask me to tell you what the Infinite Spirit is, or doubt his existence?"

A skeptic once said to a preacher, "If the human body, after death, decomposes and returns to its original elements, how is it raised from the dead and identified?" The preacher replied, "And if the child seven years old has not one particle of the matter in it that was in it when it was born, and if there is not one particle of the matter in it when it is fourteen years old that was in it when it was seven, and if all the old matter has been superseded by new once every seven years till the person is seventy years old, or if all the old matter has been superseded by new matter ten times, as scientific men maintain, and the identity is not lost; why may not the person go through one more change, in death and the resurrection, and not lose his identity? and why may not this last change take place, as it will require no more power or wisdom to accomplish it, than any of the former changes."

CONFORMITY TO THE WORLD.

I fear you will think me strict if I tell you all I think on this subject; but I will tell you, since you desire it; and I know that God is able, and willing too, to give you joys so much superior to every worldly amusement, that you will wonder you could ever give them a thought.

I must say, then, that worldliness and worldly amusements appear to me quite inconsistent with the character of a Christian; and that we can never enjoy happy converse with God till we give them up. The Christian is described in the Scriptures as 'the temple of the living God.' Now, where *the holy* God takes up his abode, surely that heart must be sanctified and set apart from every common use,—wholly devoted to his service. The spirit of the world, which reigns in worldly company, is quite opposite to his Spirit; and 'the friendship of the world' there sought, 'is enmity with God.' I know this may be called uncharitable; but I do not wish to be more charitable than the Bible; and surely experience proves it to be true. No, my dear friend, that cannot be a proper place for a Christian where religion is the thing that must not be named. The fact

is, when Christians venture into such a place, they must either have heavenly thoughts, and *then* the amusements would appear uninteresting; or else, if the amusement is amusing to them, it fills their hearts with a crowd of vain thoughts, shuts out Christ, and lets in self and the world, and so prepares room for doubts and fears and much bitter repentance, before the Spirit will again shine upon a heart which has so wantonly despised his grace.

Let me draw your attention to the sweet precept of our Lord: 'Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.' Now, I am sure you would not choose that your Lord should come for you while engaged in worldly amusements; nor would you feel that He found you watching, nor would you be ready to 'open *immediately*;' but would rather ask time to collect your scattered thoughts, and trim the wasted lamp.

'Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. And, 'whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.' These are the precepts which the Lord has given for our guidance. Let us, therefore, always ask ourselves, before we set about any study or employment, or enter into any company, 'Am I doing this to the "glory of God?" Is it my sole, or at least my principal motive? Can I "do it in the name of the Lord Jesus?" Can I boldly say, Is it such an action as He would approve? And can I look up to Him all the time I am doing it, for his sanction and blessing? If we can answer these questions satisfactorily, we may trust the answer is right; but if, on the contrary, the mind recoils at even asking such a question, be assured there is something wrong in it. This seems to me the marked distinction between the Christian and the worldling. The latter lives to himself; the former to Him who died for him, and rose again.' The one consults his own pleasure, ease, and safety—leans to his own understanding, and seeks his own glory. The Christian prays that *his* will may be swal-

lowed up in the will of God. He no longer seeks the honour which cometh from man, but desires that Christ, the Author of all his good things, may have all the glory of them.

Let us then take this consideration with us,—that Christ, not self, is to be the end of all our actions; and that whether we eat or drink, or speak, or go in or out are alone or in company, or engaged in study, we must do all 'to the glory of God,' and 'in the name of the Lord Jesus.'—*Miss Graham.*

THE GREAT NEED.

What our land most needs in all its length and breadth, is one of those seasons of general refreshing from the presence of the Lord, when the minds of the people at large shall be drawn to the contemplation of eternal things. We rejoice indeed to hear that scattered communities, in different portions of the land, are enjoying this special presence and power of the Spirit. But the nation as a whole is painfully engrossed with earthly things. Men are absorbed in business, and they forget the God of their fathers, who has wrought deliverance for them in these years of trouble. "Were there not ten cleansed, but where are the nine? They are not returned to give glory to God save this stranger." Here and there a truly devout soul may be found "waiting for the consolation of Israel." But the multitude are busy "with their farms and their merchandise." The voice of the scoffer is heard on every hand. The lovers of pleasure abound more than the lovers of God.

Every Christian who thinks of these things cannot but be painfully conscious how weak is an arm of flesh to bring about the needed change. God alone, by the mighty power of his Spirit, can so move upon the hearts of men, that they will be ready to gather in crowds at the places of prayer, that they will be willing to sit in meekness and docility at the feet of Jesus, that they will feel constrained to cry out, "What must I do to be saved?" It is a time for prayer, a time for those who truly desire these spiritual blessings, infinitely outweighing all temporal prosperity, to wrestle at the throne of grace for the de-

scend of the Holy Spirit, that he may "convince of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment." Shall the winter pass away without this rich blessing from above upon the land?—*Congregationalist.*

MEETING AT THE TOP.

Many years ago, a numerous body of Presbyterians who had seceded from the Established Church of Scotland, was split in two on a quarrel about a clause in the oath required of the freedmen of certain Scottish boroughs, which expressed "their hearty allowance of the true religion at present professed within the realm, and authorized by the laws thereof." The party who held that the oath might be conscientiously taken by seceders were called "Burghers," and their opponents "Anti-burghers." Johnnie Morton, a keen Burgher, and Andrew Gebbie, a decided Anti Burgher, both lived in the same house, but at opposite ends, and it was the bargain that each should keep one side of the house well thatched. When the dispute about the principle of their kirks, and especially the offensive clause in the oath grew hot, the two neighbours ceased to speak to each other.

But one day they happened to be on the roof at the same time, each repairing the thatch in the slope of the roof on his own side, and when they had worked up to the top, there they were—face to face. They could'n't flee, so at last Andrew took off his cap, and, scratching his head, said, "Johnnie, ycu and me, I think, hae been very foolish to dispute, as we hae done, concerning Christ's will about our kirks, until we hae clean forgot His will about ourselves; and so we hae fought sae bitterly for what we ca' the truth, that it has ended in spite. Whatever's wrang, it's perfectly certain that it never can be right to be uncivil, unneighbourly, unkind, in fac', tae hate ane anither. Na, na, that's the deevil's work, and no God's. Noo, it strikes me that maybe it's wi' the kirk as wi' this house; ye're working on ae side and me on the t'ither, but if we only do our work weel, we will meet at the tap at last. Gie's your hand', auld neighbour!" And so they shook hands and were the best o' freens ever after.

THE SECRET OF SPIRITUAL SUCCESS.

"Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain; and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it."—Zech. iv. 6, 7.

What is this blessed secret, to find out which is the longing of many a heart? I think you see it here—"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." This does not mean that man has not a place in the work of God. Such is not the case. Man *has* a place marked out for him, and, when he takes it and keeps it, then God concurs with him and prospers all his efforts. God, who made man in his own image, capable of comprehending and delighting in his counsels, has also condescended to make him his associate and worker together with Himself in carrying them into execution. Man has a place in providence: he ploughs, he sows, and reaps. He has a place in grace: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature;" "Son, go work to-day in my vineyard;" "Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in." There may be instances of souls brought to Christ without any apparent intervention of human agency. But these are exceptional cases. The rule seems to be that converted men are the channels by which life and truth are spread abroad: "Ye are the light of the world; ye are the salt of the earth." The body of Christ maketh increase of itself, according to the measure and working of every part. Those already gathered gather others, and those who have found the living water lift up their voice and cry, "Come, come; whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." In this respect, the Church is at once the building and the builder.

"Race unto race shall praise thy works,
And show thy mighty deeds."

Every living member of Christ has a work to do. There are no idlers in Satan's camp; there should be none in the household of God. Let us each ask ourselves the question, What am *I* doing?

Man *has* a place in the work, but this verse shows that it is a subordinate place; he is only instrumental. His working will not prosper, if he depend only on his own wisdom and strength. "Not by might, nor by power." This is a protest against creature idolatry and hero-worship. "Woe to him that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." Woe to him that sets up his machine, and then rests in it, making it a god; who goes to the battle confiding in his sword and in his bow; who offers incense to his net, and sacrifices to his drag. The creature, even at its best, even when it is what men call might and power, can do nothing here. There are many reasons for this. Fallen man is weak, fickle, changeable; he soon wearies, he is an earthen vessel, "even the youths faint and grow weary, and the young men utterly fall." Then again, the work is very difficult. The strong man armed keepeth his palace, and his goods are in peace; they are asleep, they are dead, they are bound with chains and fastened with cords of iniquity, and they love to have it so. What can mere man do here, in this graveyard, this valley of dry bones? Moreover, it would ruin us, if success were possible in our own strength. Paul was a very humble man; he says, "I am not sufficient of myself to think anything as of myself," and yet God, in wise mercy, gave him a thorn in the flesh to save him from being a castaway through pride, and Paul felt the need be, and thanked God for it.

Man, then, has a place in the work of God; it is a subordinate one; what is it? We answer, Man's right place is when he works in dependence on the Spirit of God. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit." God can work without man, but man cannot work effectually without God. God's great work of creation preceded man's existence. He says; "Where wast thou when I laid the foundation of the earth?" "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor?" Yet God, the Almighty God, condescends to work with and by man. Yea, he makes Himself in a manner dependent on his human creature. He says, "Go, and I will go with you." But if man does not go, neither does God.

Eighteen hundred years ago, He said, "Go ye into all the world;" but man has not gone, and so great part of the world lies desolate. It is said of Israel, that they *limited* the Holy One of Israel. It is said of Nazareth, that He could do no mighty works there because of their unbelief. He went among the Gadarenes full of grace and truth, and He wrought a work of wondrous power and compassion, but they besought Him to depart, and He went away never to return. Oh! the responsibility which this view of things involves. He adds this postscript to his richest promises, "For these things I will be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them;" and, if men do not inquire or ask for them, then the blessings do not come. But oh! the account which these restrainers of prayer will have to give for souls unsaved, and towns and countries unblessed.

Man is in his right place when the Spirit is working in, with, and by him. The Spirit can supply what is lacking in the instrument, and preserve from the errors into which, left to itself, it would be sure to fall. He can strengthen, enlighten, fill with zeal, courage, and bowels of compassion. He can come as breath from the four winds, and dry bones spring to life. Satan is mighty, but the Holy Ghost is mightier, and can cast him out. He can save from pride. He can make Jacob feel that he is but a worm, even when he is threshing mountains and making them as chaff; and so he will rejoice *only* in the Lord, and glory in the God of his salvation.

Such is man's place in the work of God, and, when he knows it and keeps it, he prospers and prevails. Man out of his right place is easily discouraged and cast down. He says, "There is a lion in the way; there is no hope." But man in his right place looks to the Lord, is hopeful and trustful, and so he is successful. Zerubbabel and his people had returned from Babylon, and set about rebuilding the city and temple; but the ruins were great, just a vast heap of rubbish, and the laborers were few in number, while their adversaries were many and active; so they soon became disheartened. They looked at the little they had done, the vast amount that yet remained to do; they thought in their hearts, "We can never accomplish

this work," and they began to say it one to another. They looked at the heaps of rubbish, and as they looked at them they seemed to grow bigger and bigger; they seemed like a great mountain, and the remark became common. "We might as well think of levelling a great mountain as clearing away these ruins," and so they gave over in despair. They were not in their right place. But God in mercy came and roused them. He spoke to them by his prophets, He breathed into them the Spirit of power and of a sound mind; they became new men; they awaked like giants refreshed with wine. Now all is changed; they are in their right place. They look around and they say, "Where is the great mountain? I see nothing but a few heaps of rubbish, which we can quickly clear away." "What art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain." There was no change on outward things; the rubbish still lay around, and the enemy were watching for their opportunity. But the people were changed; they were again upon the rock that was higher than they, and so they could look over the head of every difficulty. So with one heart they shouldered their mattocks and grasped their spears; they worked with one hand and held their weapons with the other, and the work was soon done; the walls were rebuilt, and the copingstone put on with shoutings. Man out of his right place sees molehills like mountains, but man in his right place sees mountains like molehills, and here is the secret of success.

This is no solitary case. The same truth pervades the Word of God. Look at Moses in the wilderness; God appears to him, and says, "Go and bring Israel out." Moses says, "What, I go; I brave the wrath and power of Pharaoh, from whose face I fled for my life; I take the command of Israel, who refused my interposition, and drove me away! Send by whom Thou wilt." Moses is not yet in his right place; but wait a little, and oh! how changed, when learning on Jehovah, and seeing Him who is invisible, he braves the tyrant in his might, and hurls destruction on him and his hosts. Or look at the ten spies, who have been searching the land. They say, "We be not able to go up

against the people; the cities are walled, and very great, and moreover we saw the children of Anak there. They were not in their right place. But look at Caleb and Joshua. They had seen the same things as their ten companions, but how different is the view they take! They say, "Let us go up at once and possess it, for we are well able to overcome them." They were in their right place, and so the mountain disappeared; the way was open. "Forward! forward!" was their cry, and so in due time they possessed the land. The ten spies looked up to the Anakim, and felt themselves like grasshoppers before them. Caleb and Joshua looked up to the Lord, and saw the Anakim like grasshoppers, over whom they could go trampling with ease. Look again at Saul and his army encamped over against the host of the Philistines. Goliath stalks forth and challenges them to combat. But none will respond; they are not in their right place, and so they flee from his presence. "Who," they say, "could fight this great mountain of a man? Who could stand before him? What could our weapons do against his huge artillery?" They are not in their right place. But see the ruddy shepherd lad coming upon the scene. He is in his right place, and so the mountain at once disappears. He hears Goliath's taunts with indignation; he sees Israel's fears with a blush of shame; he cries, "'Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that should defy the armies of the living God?" And so he went to meet the armed enemy with his sling in his hand and a pebble out of the brook. The Philistine disdained him, for he was but a youth; he said, "Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field." A man out of his right place commits two errors; he see the great as little, the little as great; the strong as weak, the weak as strong; and he can make no way against one who is in his right place. The combat is soon ended, and Goliath's head is in David's hand.

The same truth runs through the New Testament. The apostles were not in power till Pentecost. Hence, notwithstanding all the unparalleled advantages which they enjoyed in companying with

Christ all the time of his public ministry, He yet says to them at the end, "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high, for ye shall receive power *after* that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." When they were thus anointed, how wise, bold, and energetic they became. They looked down upon upon the hosts of their enemies and said, "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? He who sitteth in the heaven shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision." In this spirit what could withstand them? And so in many other cases. It is good to think of these things. It feeds our faith and renews our strength.

You have work to do, and you cannot do it unless you are in your right place. You have work in your own soul; there is still much land to be possessed, and you sometimes groan, being burthened. But "if you live in the Spirit, *walk* in the Spirit, and you will not fulfil the lusts of the flesh." You will get new songs, new Ebenezers, and you will often find yourself cheerfully saying, "Thanks be to God who giveth me the victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord." You have work in your family; your children may be growing up unconverted, without any signs of grace. This is a great mountain, but face it, resting on the promise, "I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring, and they shall grow up as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses." You have work in your town. Wickedness abounds, and God's people have grown familiarized, acquiescent, almost unconscious of it. They seem to fancy that the difficulty, the seeming impossibility, of correcting the evil, somehow relieves them from responsibility. It is very discouraging, but think what one living, earnest, devoted soul has often been the means, in the hand of the Spirit, of accomplishing. Think what the woman of Sychar, who became a well of living water, did for her cold, careless, apathetic town. Think what Philip, single-handed, did for Samaria. "Let God arise; let his enemies be scattered; and let them that hate Him flee before Him. As smoke is driven, so drive them away."—*The Revival.*

JIM SOAMES; OR, THE GREAT COMMANDER.

(From the Family Treasury for March.)

The subject of this tract was no soldier, and was never on board a man-of-war in his life. He was a navy, and came out of Gloucestershire, and lived when I knew him, in a narrow alley in a back street of a small country town, where you would not expect to find a titled person.

Jim Soames had a very loud voice, a hot temper, and a high spirit; and, when his anger was aroused, there were few that liked to come in his way. It was very often a word and a blow with him, and in bodily strength he was more than a match for most men.

At the public-house, where he was well known, he used to give his orders in so high a tone, and back his opinion with such violent language, laying down the law, and ready to dispute and to quarrel with any one at a moment's notice, that it is easy to understand, that when some one called him "Jim, the Commander," the title fitted so well that it stuck to him. Poor Phoebe Soames, Jim's wife, was terribly afraid of her husband, especially when she heard him coming down the alley after one of his drinking bouts; for sometimes he used to beat her sadly, and some of the marks which he had given her she bore to her grave.

Still she never complained; she was a patient, gentle wife, and hid her husband's faults and always had an excuse for him. And every week, when she could possibly spare the money, she sent her children to school, for she knew that was the best thing she could do for their welfare. But not unfrequently Jim left her barely enough money to get them food, and though he was earning the highest wages, she dare not ask him for more.

Yet Jim was proud of his children, especially of his sons, and when he was in a good temper, he used to play with and fondle them; but their games generally ended in a cry and a box on the ear, or a scolding; and so the little ones were shy of their father at the best of times.

One day, a little urchin of six years old ran up to where Jim was at work, crying out, "Father, mother wants you home! Alf (that was the oldest) has fallen off the rick, and hurt his head, and they think he's killed."

Jim's heart sunk within him, and he felt cold all over when he heard the words; but he grumbled out some reply, and threw down the crowbar he was using, and made the best of his way to his house.

The messenger, alas! was too true. There

lay the little fellow, pale and senseless, under the hands of a surgeon, who was dressing the wound, while his mother stood sobbing, and many neighbors were gathering round. He had fallen from off the top of a high rick upon some hurdles, and the doctor held out no hopes of his recovery.

Jim spoke scarcely a word. He went to his work again that afternoon, but was terribly cut up. The strong man had never received such a blow before, and he was bowed down by it. It was so sudden, so unexpected, and it touched the tenderest and most sensitive part that was alive in him. He was used to having his own way; here he could do nothing. He could rebel if he might, but he had met with a stronger than he, and he was powerless. The more he fretted with impatience, the weaker grew his pride and independence. And at last, when he and Phoebe stood alone beside the little bed where their first-born lay hard at death's door, he fairly broke down, and they sobbed together.

All that night they watched, but there was no sign of returning consciousness: and when Jim came home from work the next evening, still there was the little white face and relaxed limbs, giving scarcely any signs of life.

"I'll bide up wi' the lad to-night," said Jim to Phoebe; "thee go and lie down, and I'll call ye if he stirs." And Phoebe went and lay down.

About the middle of the night Jim dozed off to sleep, and dreamed that he was a boy once more in his father's garden in Gloucestershire, and he was much troubled in his sleep, and woke; and turning towards the bed, he saw, by the dim light of the candle, Alf's eyes wide open, and looking at him.

"Father!" said the boy, "pray to God, pray to God!"

Poor Jim hardly knew what to do, or what to say. He had often taken God's name in vain, but now, to address him in serious thought and purpose, was what he had not done since the happy days which his dreams had recalled to him.

"Shall I call your mother, Alf?" said he.

"Pray God make me well," said the child.

Jim went and called Phoebe, but before she could come to him, the eyes were again closed in heavy sleep.

Between that time and his death there were but few intervals of consciousness; and almost the only words that passed his lips were, "Father, pray to God," and some few questions about his place in school.

From that time Jim Soames was an altered man. On the Sunday after he buried his son, he heard words in a sermon in church which made a deep impression upon him.

They were to this effect, that often, until a sinner feels God's heavy hand, he will not repent; until he is brought low by sickness, or want, or trouble, or loss, he takes no thought of the evil of his ways, nor of the justice of an offended God, nor of pardon and peace to be obtained through Jesus Christ, for "there is no salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts iv. 12.) And he thought within himself, how very true it is that God deals with us as a father with his erring children; and he felt that it was of his great mercy that he was not cast off for ever; but had a season of warning and a call to a change of life.

"Ah!" he said, "my poor boy's last words were, 'Pray to God, Father!' and I couldn't pray. Oh dear! to think of being brought to my senses by the death of my boy! He knew better than I, poor lad. And God knew better than both of us what was for our good."

Yes, the change that was worked in the heart of this sorrowing father by the powerful operation of the Spirit of God was a mighty one. The darkness passed, and the true light now shined, faintly and uncertainly at first, and wavering sometimes; but it was never again put out, and it grew clearer and more bright, until it became perfect day.

"It is God alone who has done it," he would say, "by the power of his Spirit. He has made me what I am now, a monument of grace; and by-and-by, clothed in the spotless robe of the Saviour's righteousness, and washed clean through His precious blood, I shall see the lad in heaven, where now he is better off."

Jim's home was a happier one from this day forth. He was soon able to take a better house in a healthier part, though he had to pay a higher rent, for he could save that from the public-house. His children were better clothed and were constant at school; and Phœbe could now say with truth, that there was never a kinder husband than her Jim.

But now Jim showed himself a greater Commander than before this change. For he had still within the evil heart ever tempting him; he had still the same high spirit to keep under, and the old self-will to tame. His late companions jeered and laughed at him, and used sometimes such bitter, cruel taunts, as to force him to earnest prayer, and every means of self-control, that he might not break loose again, and speak and do as he was wont.

He is the best master that masters himself, and this Jim was enabled to do; and, after many a hardly won battle, it was easier to

subdue the rising passion, and control the angry retort, until at length he conquered himself quite. Not that he did not fall into sin, but he hated it and was grieved, and he watched and prayed more and more against it.

Yes, being such a man as he was, Jim Soames was a great Commander, for he ruled and ordered himself wisely and well. For "he that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city" (Prov. xvi. 32); "and the fruit of righteousness is sown in the peace of them that make peace" (James iii. 18).

Blessed are the men of peaceful life,
Who quench the flame of growing strife;
They shall be called the heirs of bliss,
The sons of God, the God of peace.

MY BABY'S SERMON.

I am alone in the house this Sunday morning with my little James. All are gone to church but the Lambie and his Mother.—How sweetly he sleeps!—safe in having felt her near, when the little eyelids dropped, and the clenched hand softly opened, like a night-blowing bud, as his sleep came on!

How sweet to feel myself so much to him! "As one whom his mother comforteth so will I comfort you." God speaks so. He knows all hearts—the mother's tenderness—her baby's eager search for her soothing—the father's heart pitying his children, and giving "good things" to them. All these are known to him—given us by him as lessons in his word—and repeated to our very hearts in the sight and sound of these his little messengers. So he teaches us to understand his love. His children shall be comforted, "as one whom his mother comforteth." And how is it? See how in all annoyance, pain, and weariness, the little one turns to his mother. She alone can soothe. She alone can satisfy. His first lesson is to know her—to gasp and cry for her at his first vague consciousness of a want.

No, it is not in later life that a mother and her consolations can be better understood and appreciated. Others can then comfort. Other ties are recognized; and it is not necessarily (alas! it is not often) that a man seeks his mother's comfort, above and before all others, after he has left her side, and braved the world's battle alone or with other companions. It is better so. There are other lessons in God's word and man's life than those the children bring us. The mother's heart could ill brook to spare that sweeter earlier lesson of man's love, and that higher Love which it shadows forth, that is bound

up in the words (a little bitter to the mother's ear!) "a man shall *leave* father and mother."

But the mother spoken of in the verse is the *Babe's* mother—his only one. The sight of her loving face is the delight of his eyes. Her tender voice is his music. Her arms his cradle of rest. To soothe and satisfy, she is all he wants. Truly she is the type of what God is to his children—"a very present help in time of trouble." The mother of the text is a mother as God would have her—a good, nay! the best of mothers. What honour to be appointed to shadow forth such high spiritual realities! What earnest diligence and care required to bear the honour, and fulfil aright the charge so given!

Lord, make me such a mother to my little one! Lord, be thou to my soul all that I am to him! Lord, make me learn of him how I ought at all times to turn to thee, cry after thee, and be satisfied with nothing but thee! May I learn of him to rest in thee, and, having this portion, to seek no other!

How many lessons these little ones teach us! "As new-born babes," says the apostle, "desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." An older child might have this or that substitute for milk, and would grow the better for it. "To everything there is a season." But the apostle expressly says, "As *new-born* babes"—making the power and strength of his exhortation to spring out of very feebleness. So, he tells us, must we "hunger and thirst" after heavenly knowledge, so shall we be filled, and nourished, and "grow thereby" unto the "full stature of perfect men in Christ."

Then there is the next stage in the little life, spoken of by the Psalmist in the 131st Psalm. "Surely," he says, "I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother. My soul is even as a weaned child." In the verse preceding we learn what is the behaviour ascribed to the little child "weaned of his mother"—"Lord, mine heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty, neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me." Here again we find the type perfect. It is God's child—the child as it should be—that is described—humble, lowly, quiet, and contented. full of love, and trusting without question—such a little one as Jesus took in his arms and blessed, and of whom he said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

The little child does not reason about his sorrow. He does not think or know that he is to profit by the change—that he needs it—is ready for it. Yet so it is. But these are "things too high for him." He only knows that it is *his mother* who takes from him what has seemed at once his necessity

and his right—that *she* gives him some thing else instead. And in his love and trust he receives it, and "quiets himself" with it. It is his first effort—his first self-reliance—the first onset in the battle of his life. What his mother's breast has done for him hitherto, he must now do, and does for himself. He quiets himself.

Oh, for such a spirit! When God takes away my blessings—so long possessed perhaps, that I have learned to count them *mine*, needful to me, a *right*—oh, to be able to quiet myself as the child does, in the simple loving trust in the hand and heart that takes them away!

Let me learn this too from the text, that as a mother deprives her babe of its first food, she does so but to provide some other kind, different, but better suited to its growing wants. She loves it none the less, when she steadily denies it what she knows it is wise to withhold. Nay! she proves the greatness of her love in so paining her mother's heart that yearns to soothe her darling, and see it smile again.

So the Lord chastens his children. So he weans them from the world, in whatever form they may be satisfying themselves with it. Yes! he even takes from them good things that they may seek and find *better*. He would have them seek higher food, and hunger after "the bread of life," with which they shall be filled.

Let me believe it and trust it, even where my weeping eyes cannot see it clearly—he has a better to give for every good he takes away. And oh, may I ever seek to "quiet myself even as a child weaned of his mother," "for of such is the kingdom of heaven!"

Thank God for such messages, and for such a message-bearer!—*Bible Hours.*

Christianity is an individual work; the grace of God converts soul by soul. Each soul is a world in which a creation peculiar to itself must be accomplished. The Church is but the assembly of all the souls in which this work is wrought, and who are now united because they have but "one spirit, one Lord, one Father."

BE HEARTY IN ALL YOUR LABOURS.
—Let not your head, and hands, and tongue be busy, and your heart idle. Results, by their greatness, will surprise the truly engaged, while the double-minded will wonder that so little good is done. When the walls of Jerusalem went up rapidly, it was because "the people had a mind to build." "The sluggard desireth, and hath nothing."

THE MISSIONARIES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

There are some people who give no countenance to missions or missionary meetings, because they say they are new things—inventions of the present age, and they like to stick to what is ancient. But those who speak thus, show not only their deplorable ignorance in general, but their amazing lack of knowledge of the Bible in particular. Solomon says that "There is nothing new under the sun." And the subject of missions and missionary meetings is not new. If any of you wish antiquity on the side of an enterprise before you embark in it rest assured that you have it in the case of missions, for the most ancient assembly that was ever held was a missionary assembly. The first meeting that was held in the ancient ages of eternity, was a missionary meeting. Away back further than imagination can wing her flight along the cycles of the unbeginning and unknown past, a missionary meeting was held in the habitation of God's holiness—in the court of heaven. It was convened not for the purpose of selecting a mission field nor yet to raise means to evangelize it, but to find a missionary to undertake the work. The mission field which infinite love had decreed to act upon had been chosen from eternity. It was not to the realms of self-ruined and rebellious angels that the missionary was to be sent, but to a planet which was to be created and placed third in order in the solar system, on which it was foreseen that a then uncreated race to be denominated human should fall. Our earth was to be the mission field. Still the missionary was awaiting, and the enquiry of the Father, of his co-equals the Son and the Spirit, was "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" The question went outward from the throne of God, and sought an answer from the utmost bounds of space, but from

its untraversed and illimitable fields none came back. No one could solve the query but a God; and Heaven be praised for ever that a God did solve it. The Son, the second person of the Godhead, set the matter at rest, by volunteering to go himself. "Here am I," he said; "send me." His offer was accepted, and the agreement closed that he should be the Father's great missionary to man, and that angels and prophets should prepare the way for his advent, and that when the years of preparation had been filled up, he should appear in Bethlehem in infantile weakness, to begin His work of teaching, suffering and dying. He was the first missionary and the greatest—the prince of missionaries; all others are but his ambassadors, and He has been sending them forth in every age, from the very first. The first missionary sermon that was ever preached was delivered by Jehovah himself, in the garden of the fall, before the transgressors were driven out, in these words which contain the kernel of the gospel, "I will put enmity between thee (*i.e.* the serpent) and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." From that ancient promise and prediction the church of God took its rise; and we behold witness after witness, as the ages roll round, standing forth as missionaries of the truth. The object of a missionary is to spread the knowledge of God amongst the heathen, and as all who do not know God savingly, are strictly speaking heathen, wherever there was a voice lifted bearing testimony to the truth, that voice was the voice of a true missionary. Wherever and in whatever manner rays of heavenly light broke in upon the world's darkness, they were but heralds and tokens of the coming day, when the Sun of Righteousness would shine with meridian effulgence upon the nations. The great centre point of missionary influence is *God reconciled*

in Christ, and reconciling the world unto himself, and from this centre it has ever moved outward and onward. And every individual "who has tasted that the Lord is gracious" becomes a secondary centre—a living embodiment of the truth—one of God's missionaries. Man does not require to go away into some far off clime amongst men of a foreign tongue to be a missionary. Every true Christian is and ought to be a missionary; and he does not need to enter a pulpit to preach. The world is his pulpit, and the actions of his life are his sermons. A holy life is the best sermon, and he who exhibits that to the world is the best preacher, and the greatest missionary. It is by such life preaching that the world has made advancement in religion, more than by pulpit preaching; and every century of the past has had this powerful kind of preaching, for God has never been without a seed to serve Him, and never shall while the sun and the moon endures. "One generation shall praise his works to another." "His righteousness shall be for ever, and his salvation from generation to generation." As he has appointed that one race shall be the means of prolonging natural life to the next, so it is with the spiritual life. Occasionally a Lazarus shaking off the garments of the grave, assisted by a more potent arm than that of flesh, has come forth from the sleep of death; so in like manner that voice at which not only the earth shook but also heaven spake audibly to man in the old economy, and at times the Great Missionary appeared in person, for "his goings forth were from of old," but the general mode of spreading the truth has been by human instrumentality. All the Old Testament worthies were missionaries. The patriarchs were all missionaries to their own families, if to none else. Enoch's 365 years' walk through a wicked world was a glorious missionary

tour. Whether he travelled far and much we are not informed, but this we do know, that his company was the best, for he walked with God. His blameless life taught and upheld true religion and his departure hence, but not by the way of the grave, told to all coming time, that, "Verily there is a reward to the righteous." Noah was another grand old missionary in the years of ancient times. For 120 years he lifted up both his voice and his hammer against sin. Every knock upon the timber of his ark was a sermon, telling the men of his day to repent and turn to God. And that ark of his was the first missionary vessel that was ever launched upon the wave. It was built to carry the knowledge of the true God across the flood. And that the rainbow that was hung out in the sky when he landed on Ararat, has been a mute but faithful preacher of God's love and covenant, keeping character ever since. It is a missionary vow declaring in its language of beauty, that the world, the great mission field, shall while it lasts be cursed no more for man's sin. Abraham was called from Ur of the Chaldees, and led out from the midst of idolaters to be a missionary in a land that he knew not of, and there to maintain the worship of the one true God. He travelled through Mesopotamia, Syria, Palestine and Egypt; and within his nomadic tent wherever he went, he upheld Jehovah's honour, and the fear of the Lord was upon the nations through which he passed. That was a great sermon which he preached on the mountain top, when he stood with the knife uplifted to plunge it in his son.—A Paul could reason and write concerning the nature of faith, but it took an Abraham to set it forth in action. His unfinished Mount Moriah sermon, which he preached to all nations and times, was the most eloquent sermon upon faith which

was ever given; and Abraham shall ever rank high amongst the world's preachers. He was the first missionary that appeared in Egypt; but his great-grandson, Joseph, was Egypt's great missionary. His brethren sold him through envy; but it was God that sent him thither, as the saviour of that land and of his father's household. "The archers sorely grieved him, and shot at him; but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob." His leading an upright and God-fearing life amid many and strong temptations, was the manner in which he preached from his youth upward. In the home circle, in the pit in the wilderness, in the dungeon and at Pharaoh's court, Joseph was a preacher, and such was his influence that he established, in the land of the Pharaohs, laws which existed till the time of Moses.

And Moses was another illustrious missionary of the olden time. While tending sheep upon Mount Horeb, he received his commission from the Most High to go into Egypt as His ambassador. And there he worked wondrously, until at last he brought up Israel to the confines of Canaan, with an high hand. His sermons in Egypt proclaimed to the Egyptians that in the things wherein they boasted of their gods, and dealt proudly, Jehovah was above them; and his desert march proved that they who trust in the Lord shall lack no good thing. He was emphatically the great missionary of the Jews, and God so honoured him that he buried him Himself, in a mountain gorge on the heights of Mount Pisgah. What an honour was this!

"His was the grandest funeral
That ever passed on earth;
But no man heard the tramping,
Or saw the train go forth.
But had he not high honour?
The hill-side for his pall,
To lie in state while angels wait,
With stars for tapers tall,

And the dark rock-places like tossing
plumes,
O'er his bier to wave,
And God's own hand, in that lonely land,
To lay him in the grave."

God sometimes uses the wicked as His missionaries. Balaam, the false prophet, was an instance of this. When God's chosen people were on the borders of their possession, he, at the request of Moab, came from Mesopotamia to curse them; but, contrary to the king's intention and desire, God made him give utterance to the poetic prediction, "There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel." Not only has God made the wrath of man to praise Him: He has even employed the dumb animals as His missionaries. Not long after the settlement of Israel in Canaan, we read of two Philistine kine acting as God's missionaries. When the ark of the covenant had been taken in battle by the army of the Philistines, and disease and disaster had accompanied it from city to city, and Dagon, their god, had fallen before it, they made a new cart and placed it thereon, and yoked two milch kine to it, and sent them off without a driver. These cattle, led by a divine hand, took it straight to Bethshemesh where they were offered up in sacrifice as martyrs in the cause of God. That sermon of the ark and of the cattle, with their calves shut up at home, contrary to expectation making for the land of Judah, would be told in every home of Philistia, constraining all to acknowledge that the God of the Jews was a great God, and that every beast of the forest was His, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. During the time of the Judges, whenever religion began to decline, God raised up some one as the protector of His laws and the defender of religion. The chief of these were Gideon and Samuel. When Gideon and his 300 men went against the countless hosts of

Midian, they were engaged in missionary work. The sermon they preached that night with their lighted lamps, pitchers and timbrels, utterly destroyed the Midian army and gave practical exposition of the text, "There is no king saved by the multitude of an host;" for the battle is with the Lord, and He casts victory to either side of the balance at His pleasure. Samuel was a missionary dedicated to God from his infancy. In his boyhood he seemed as a little missionary at Shiloh, and when he arrived at manhood he set to work to improve the moral and social condition of the people of Israel. He was a circuit preacher. He made annual missionary visits to Bethel, Gilgal and Mizpah. He also established a national system of education, and maintained the "schools of the prophets." In the time of the Kings, too, the Jews had some distinguished missionaries. David was not only the great inspired bard of the nation but a missionary in the highest sense. He was the first who purposed to erect a fixed place of worship for Jehovah. He considered it as wrong that he himself should dwell in an house of cedar, while the ark of the covenant of the Lord remained under curtains. Is it a part of the missionary's work to erect houses to God? then king David was one in this, and the first who started the idea; and Solomon, his son, was the first who carried it into execution. A collection was made for it throughout all the land, and unlike many church building committees, he did not go himself, nor ask others to come and worship in it, until it was clear of debt. At its dedication, the first place of worship had no mortgage resting upon it.— And it was no insignificant structure either. Both king and people went at the work in earnest, and no less than 108,000 talents of gold and 1,017,000 talents of silver were not only subscribed but collected for

it, and 183,000 men were employed at it for seven years. And the people did not complain at having to give so much, for when it was set apart for the worship of Jehovah they were as liberal as ever: they offered in sacrifice to God, on that occasion, 20,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep.— Ye who grumble at having to build churches, look back and consider how the first place of worship went up, and then go and imitate these large and liberal-hearted Jews.

Amongst the twelve tribes, the Levites were the appointed instructors of the others, and in the time of Jehoshaphat a missionary meeting was held at Jerusalem, to see if anything could be done to reform the land, which was fast lapsing into idolatry, and the result was that they were sent through all the cities of the land with the Book of the Law in their hand, that they might teach the people. About the same time a bold and fearless missionary made his appearance in the kingdom and at the court of Ahab, as the messenger of God; and on Carmel's heights he preached a sermon that made Kishon river run red with the blood of Baal's priests, and gave the worship of that idol such a death-blow that it never again recovered from it. And from Elijah's life true missionaries of all lands may learn a lesson. See him, in the years of drought and famine, sitting in solitude by the banks of the Chereth, while the ravens are winging through the air with his food. Think not, after such a sight as this, that God's servants will starve. Verily they shall be fed, even though His ravens should be commissioned to bring them bread. And let no one think that he can stop the chariot wheels of God's truth by the withholding of his substance from its support. The chariot of the Gospel shall roll on, whether we put our shoulders to the wheels or not. Neither shall God wait for chariotwheels.—

He who made a dove the bearer of glad tidings before, can do so again. He who opened the mouth of an ass to rebuke a prophet, and who made an arrow, shot at a venture, preach His truth upon the battle-field of Ramoth Gilead, is as fertile in resources now as ever; and His gospel shall be proclaimed to the ends of the earth, even though the flowers of summer, the snow-flakes of winter, the trees of the forest, or the stones of the field should cry out. And if we do not send missionaries to the heathen willingly, God may cause us to do it in another way, and at greater expense than we imagine. When He wanted an outcast gathered in from Syria, in the days of Elijah, and no one went to do it, He sent Benhadad and his legions as a scourge upon the land, to find a missionary. And they found one, not in the schools of the prophets, but in the person of a little girl whom they carried captive beyond Damascus that she might preach peace to the general of the Syrian army. When he wished to save Nineveh, and a prophet chose rather to sink into a watery grave than to go as His messenger to that great city, He made a fish bring him up from the deep and send him back to his work. So also when God wanted to bring a proud and boasting Nebuchadnezzar to bless, praise and honour the Most High that liveth for ever and ever, and to acknowledge that all His works are works of truth, and His ways judgment, and that those who walk in pride He is able to abase, He sent a mighty army into Judea to bring up Daniel the interpreter of dreams to that heathen king's court, to teach him. And if we neglect the heathen, perchance He may chastise us with the scorpion lash of war, as He did His own people in the days of old. If we do not with our offerings and endeavours, send the story of the Nazarene to those sitting in darkness, God may select the famine or

the pestilence as the missionaries by which they shall hear it. For it shall assuredly be told them. The waves of the surging ocean may be checked, and cease to flow; but of the increase and progress of Messiah's kingdom there shall be no end, for Isaiah, the missionary poet of the Old Testament, gave utterance to God's truth, when beholding in far futurity the Church of Christ victorious, he sung: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it."

THE MEANS AND THE END, OR, REVIVAL MEASURES.

We need not say that from the beginning to the present day, we have been of those who believe in the necessity of the special influences of the Holy Ghost to convict of sin, to convert the sinner and save the soul.

Our trumpet has indeed given an uncertain sound, if any one has been in doubt as to our views on this or any other theme. In all the years of discussion through which the Church has passed, and with the most fearful pressure on us from those whose zeal is without knowledge, and whose measures were in our judgment worse than none, we have without wavering, held to the doctrine that moral suasion cannot change the human heart, that dry bones cannot be made to live without the breath of the Lord.

But who ever saw on these pages a line that called in question the usefulness or necessity of means, agencies, measures, by which the instrumental truth shall be brought home to the intellect and heart of the sinner? No, with the profoundest sense of utter dependence on divine grace, and conscious that without God we can do nothing, it has been our mode of teaching to say that it is our duty to pray as if we could do nothing of ourselves, and to labor as if we could do it all alone. Thus would we combine faith and works, and show the one by the other.

And it is here that we think there is need of a quickened sense of obligation on the part of those who, in sympathy with us in the main, are yet slow to apprehend the demand for increased religious activity in this present age of ours. To keep abreast of the times in general learning, requires constant reading, watchfulness and labor. To get rich, in the rush and crush of the world to-day, demands a quickened energy that past centuries did not require. But the acquisition of learning or riches, is not to be compared with the knowledge of God, and the wealth of heaven. Yet the same modification of circumstances, with the progress of time, that makes *effort* more imperative now than ever to secure this world's good, impels in a higher sense to the use of every available instrumentality, with all possible energy, in the work of saving souls from death.

There is such a thing as religious wisdom, as well as worldly wisdom: an adaptation of means to ends, the employment of such agencies as sound judgment commends, experience has approved and God has blessed. This we do in the spread of the Gospel by missionary societies, in the erection of costly churches, in the publication of books, in the education of preachers. God could work wonders of salvation without any of these secondary causes of success. But it is his plan to use us, by making us use them. We are instruments in his hands; and what we do under the guidance of his Spirit, he does through us. It is God that worketh in us, while we are working out our own salvation and that of others.

Because rash and indiscreet vulgar men intrude themselves into the Church, and get up excitements that are mistaken for genuine revivals, we must not lie on our oars, and refuse to use any means at all. Because we have yielded too much to this feeling of disgust, with the excesses of others, we have swung away over to the other extreme, and settled down upon the do-nothing plan, for fear of doing too much. This is as fatal a mistake as the one we would avoid. Scylla is as dangerous as Charybdis. *In medio tutissimus* est. There is no justification for that feeling which refuses to do anything lest we overdo. We ought to work for the

salvation of those around us, as we do for the heathen; that is, set on foot those instrumentalities which God will delight to bless for the revival of his people and the conversion of sinners. This is Scriptural and philosophical, and has the sanction of experience and history, as wise and well. The set time to favor Zion has come.— Within the last thirty years we have not had any year more signally marked by the outpouring of God's Spirit, than this year now passing. And these revivals have not, as a general thing, been attended by the labors of itinerant and indiscreet evangelists, but they have followed the increased prayers, and labors of the minister and people in each of the places blessed. And when the labors of the evangelists are called in, as they certainly may be with great usefulness at times, these glorious revivals are not marked by those excesses which have, in years past, brought deserved censure upon those who made revivalism a trade. God is working mightily now among the churches. His windows are open. It is a good time to work and to pray. We would stir the churches to take hold on the arm of the Lord, and in his strength to do great things now. We would entreat them, everywhere, to be encouraged by what they read of the revival, to expect the same and greater things for themselves.—
Observer.

CHRIST'S GIFT OF PEACE.

Sometimes, to thoughtful minds, and to hearts susceptible to better impressions, or craving after better things, there comes a new element of unrest, which no art can soothe, and no human philosophy charm away. The soul of man is lonely without God, and wretched without his grace. And sometimes he *feels* that it is. It wakes up from its long strange dream of pictured joys or sorrows; from the delirium of amusement or ambitious striving, it comes to itself; and then, amid the tumult of its thoughts and anxieties, it asks for what it never sought before—a peace which no luxury of art, no brilliant fancy of novelist or poet, no ingenuity or invention can bestow. Sir Humphry Davy declared that he envied no quality of mind or intellect in others—

no genius, wit, power or fancy, but before every other blessing he would prefer as most delightful and useful a religious belief, making life a discipline of goodness, and opening to the prospect the security of everlasting joys. Surely the soul was made to find its proper rest in God, its trust in his providence, its joy in his love, its triumph in his grace. An eminent artist employed in a Christian family to paint the portraits of its members, there beheld the beauty of religion, and was so moved by it, that on taking leave of his employer, he said to him: "Sir, I would cheerfully give away all the fame and riches of this world, if I could have your faith." A German Pantheist once remarked to a Christian scholar from this country with whom he had become acquainted, "I would give the world, if I had it, to be able to say *thou* to my God as you do to yours."

It is only through faith in Christ as the soul's Redeemer that this envied attainment, bringing peace to the soul, can be secured. Christ gives it, gives it freely to the hungering, thirsting, restless soul. What a charm, like the music of heaven, there is in that winning invitation, "Come unto me, ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Surely his promise does not and cannot fail. He will give, he does give, according to his Word.

How wonderful is this gift! It is inexhaustibly rich. The world sees just its surface, and admires it; but there is something better beneath, which it does not see. In the "Greenroom" in Dresden, where century after century the princes of Saxony have stored their treasures, there is said to be one gem, presented long ago to a Saxon queen, which might seem almost an emblem of the greatest of all gifts. It is a silver egg, which, at the touch of a spring, opens and reveals a golden yolk. Within this, which opens in a similar manner, is a splendid golden crown studded with jewels. This, too, by the touch of another spring, opens, and in its centre is found a magnificent diamond ring. The peace which Christ gives to the soul is the "diamond ring," the inmost and rarest of all the treasures of the soul. But around it, and still around it, are other blessings, the peace of sweet content, the peace of un-

murmuring submission, the peace of the weary soul resting on that Providence that lovingly and wisely orders its lot.—*Rev. Dr. Gillett.*

WAX AND SEALS.

Paul prayed for an opportunity. He thanked God for an open door. In doing any work, we need material as well as tools. No impression can be made with a seal unless there is some wax ready to receive the stamp. Do not neglect to have the wax warm because you have a well-out seal. Think of what you are to work *on*, as well as what you are to work *with*.—Wendell Phillips and others who were engaged in active efforts to mould public opinion, remarked that their object was not to prepare finished orations but to move the heart. Think of that, ye who preach the Gospel of Christ! Be not exhausted with labor for the discourse, but with labor for the hearers. Let those who hear have their *hearts* in waiting. The truth will be powerful, according to the susceptibility of that on which it falls. Paper is as valuable, in the art of printing, as types and ink. We need the surface on which to make the impression, as much as the means by which to impress. A heart warm with desire for God's truth, is the surface on which to receive the revelation of His Will. Love will give that hue to our souls, which makes the impression come out clear and true upon the texture of the spirit. Would you be sealed, then be warm with true desire, and every touch of God's Word will leave its mark upon your heart.—*Observer.*

SIMPLICITY.—How admirable is the simplicity of the Evangelists! They never speak injuriously of the enemies of Jesus Christ, of his judges, nor of his executioners. They report the facts without a single reflection. They comment neither on their Master's mildness when he was smitten, nor on his constancy in the hour of ignominious death, which they thus describe—"And they crucified Jesus."—*Racine.*

The chains with which the devil binds and hold many of his subjects are made of **GOLD.**

RISE, AND BE GOING!

BY REV. THO. L. CUTLER.

"Rise! let us be going!" These were the stirring words which Christ addressed, on the night of his betrayal, to the three neglectful disciples who had slumbered at the garden-gate while he was suffering above the fearful agonies in Gethsemane. They had been told to "tarry and watch with him;" that was the duty of the hour, and they had criminally neglected it. The past was lost. Already the torches of Judas and his gang were seen flashing through the olive-branches. What is to be done must be done at once. "Rise," exclaims the Saviour, "let us be going; behold he is at hand that doth betray me." While he yet speaks, the armed band of soldiers press up around him, and Judas is already planting on his Master's cheek that devilish dagger of a traitor's kiss.

From these words of Christ we wish to address a practical hint or two to that large class who are grieved or conscience-smitten over lost opportunities. Our first hint is, Do not waste your time in unavailing regrets. You cannot dig up the buried past. It avails nothing for a full-grown man to sit down and weep over his neglect to study hard and improve to the full his early educational advantages. The seed-time of youth is gone; but shall he never try to make up the sad deficiency? Because youth was lost, shall manhood be flung away after it? By no means. I have known of men who, at five-and-twenty, set resolutely about a course of study and observation that made their middle life respectable; I have known women who had frittered away their girlhood, and then grew ashamed of themselves, and made up their losses as rapidly as they could. My friend, John B. Gongh, was never educated until he began his public career; poverty and the bottle robbed him of his youth, but he has saved his manhood gloriously. One of the greatest British admirals never trod a ship's deck until he was forty; yet he lived to carry his country's flag through battle-smoke to splendid victories. I know of persons in my own church whose characters were never developed, and who never made themselves felt for God, or any good work, until they had existed

twenty-five or thirty years for absolutely nothing. Then they began to live. Then their conscience awoke; they gave their hearts to Christ; their minds grew; they found a nobler purpose, and began to shed forth a powerful influence. One man among us, before he was one year old in the Christian life, did so much work for Christ as to make good amends for his wasted past. "Never too late to mend," when one is earnestly determined to mend. To every unconverted person who is conscience-smitten over a misspent youth, and a guilty career of selfishness and sin, we would say, "Rise up, and be going!" You cannot dig up the mouldering past, but you can seize the precious present, and secure the future that God may yet spare to you. The battle of life is not lost. As one of Napoleon's marshals once said to him, "Sire, there's time enough to win a victory yet before dark." You are not yet before the judgment-bar, nor is your probation ended. Rise at once and hasten to Christ. Come to him with an honest confession of your guilt. There is a terrible score against you on God's book of remembrance. Go down on your knees, and ask Jesus to lift off that mountain-load of a life long transgression. You have a great deal to confess. Let other people's sins alone and look to your own. Implore Jesus to pardon them for his love's sake and the sorrows of his bitter cross. "It was a hard trial to my pride to make my first prayer," said a stout-willed man; "but when my knees touched the floor, my heart burst." His sins were heavy, but the weight of God's love was heavier still, and they broke him down.

As you have lost so much time already, you must be in quick earnest to come to Jesus. Treat the sin that stands in your way as you would treat the person who stood in your way if you were rushing into your burning house to save your own child. Does fear of man hinder? Face it down. Let no one laugh you out of your soul. Does business hinder? Make it your first business to seek God. Do pleasure-loving friends flood you with invitations to their entertainments? So is God inviting you to the place of prayer. Whose invitation will you decline—man's or God's? If you would be saved, you

must be in earnest. From a burning ship a crowd of passengers leaped out into the boats and cut them loose. One boat was so filled that it settled to the water's edge. One drowning man clung frantically to the boat's side. "Throw him off!" was the cry in the boat; "he will sink us." Some one, seizing a knife, cut off the fingers that clutched the gunwale; but the resolute creature flung his bleeding arm around the rudder and clung to that! "Poor fellow!" was the tender cry that run through the boat; "his life is as precious to him as any of ours; let him hold on if he can." That man was in earnest. He felt a thousand fathoms of cold ocean beneath him, and saw death glaring at him in every wave. Shall a man be more earnest to save his natural life than you are to save your immortal soul?

But I would not apply to you the argument of danger so much as the argument of duty. You are simply robbing yourself of life's purest luxury when you rob yourself of the joys of a forgiving heart and of a useful, holy life. The best part of your life for serving God may be irretrievably gone; but save every price-less minute of the remainder. It was far on in a day of disaster that the swift-footed Sheridan came flying up the Shenandoah to arrest his retreating troops, and to roll back a defeat into a victory. Sinner of many years! the battle has gone against you thus far. Sin has conquered conscience thus far, and robbed you of life's highest joys and best achievements. Stop not with mourning the lost years and the lost opportunities to do a good work for Christ. You may yet win heaven, and perhaps win some souls for heaven too. During the present revival in my church, several persons have entered the service of Christ who are past forty years of age. They will not bring in such a sheaf as they might have brought had they entered the harvest-field in early life; but they are gleaned vigorously, and may yet secure a handful of the golden grain.

II. Some persons who have long had a secret hope of conversion have wasted no little time by delaying a public confession of Christ. They sit nursing their doubts and fears instead of doing their duty. They are feeling their pulses to ascertain wheth-

er they are alive, instead of *proving* their faith by their works, and strengthening their feeble faith by action. "I have lost just eight years," was the sad confession of a friend of mine who joined the church after eight years of trembling, vexing, self-tormenting delay. Each year weakened her faith until she grew alarmed lest the feeble taper would go out entirely; then she kindled it into a flame by one vigorous swing of decision. It burns brightly to-day.

III. We have an earnest word, in closing, to backsliders. You are the sleepers at the garden-gate. Your eyes are heavy, and your hands are motionless. The prayer-bell with silvery chime is ringing nearly every evening, but you do not hear it; nor does the loud alarm-bell for lost souls rouse you from your slumber. Well might your neglected Master address you with indignant irony, "*sleep on now, and take your rest*, for ye have betrayed me into the hands of sinners. But as the torches of detection fall on your sealed eyelids, methinks I hear that voice of injured love sounding into your ears with trumpet tones, "*RISE UP AND BE GOING!*" The night is far spent! Sinners are stumbling over you into perdition! The past is gone! Awake, or thou wilt lose thy crown! And what thou doest, do quickly!"

READING AND HEARING.

BY REV. EDWARD N. KIRK, D.D.

In regard to *The Public Reading of the Scriptures*, we need a change in the ministers: that is, they must, as a class record a profound conviction that God's Word, rightly read, is more powerful than anything the preacher can utter: so that he shall not drawl, or rattle, or mumble through that part of the service as an unmeaning and irksome form, as if he would say to the people, "This is nothing; wait till you come to my sermon."

Another point to be gained is, a more thorough mastery by the reader of the meaning of the passage to be read; and to this must be added a more thorough cultivation of the power to express the beauty, the meaning, the force of each passage.

This is a holy art yet too little appreciated. It has been said of some preachers, that their readings of the Word of God were a complete commentary, and a powerful sermon.

There was a preacher who expected from the reading of certain hymns to a congregation that some persons would be converted; and he always used this reading of the hymn as itself an act of worship—a means of cultivating or awakening the religious sensibilities of the audience.

There is also—*The Hearing of the Word*. Many regard this as an idle form. They never think of listening to God in this exercise. It is to them quite dull.—Their feeling is—"I understand this;" or, it is unmeaning, or inapplicable to me. Preaching they regard either as an entertainment, or as merely instructive. If it is profound, they are too indolent to attempt to comprehend it. If it should be impressive, they stop at the effect on the sensibilities, and go no farther. Such persons are not seeking to know themselves, God, Christ, their duty, or the way of life. The two ways of hearing the message of God are as contrasted as the destinies to which they lead. The difference between the true worshipper and the unbeliever is seen at every point of this part of worship. Their views of the office of preaching differ vitally. The one regards it as only a part of the worship; the other, all, unless he is to hear good music.—One regards it as God addressing him through His messenger; the other regards the preacher as a professional lecturer. One is looking to see how much of God's grace he can find in the discourse; the other, how much human talent. The one is seeking to obtain spiritual benefit; the other, literary gratification.

Their mental attitudes, too, are contrasted. In the one, conscience is awake to hear the Lord speak; in the other, the critical judgment is awake to try the preacher and the doctrine by an artistic standard. In the one, faith receives everything drawn from Scripture; in the other, so much is received as is agreeable. The one desires God's blessing; to the other, that is a matter of no moment.

The results, of course, are just as oppo-

site as the modes of using this ordinance. The spiritual worshipper only is blessed in hearing. He comes with prayer, listens with prayer, and retires with praise. The other comes prayerless, hears unbenefited, and retires unblessed.

The same contrast is seen in the department of praise. With the true worshipper, it is an address to God; with the formal worshipper, it is simply a luxury, or an idle form. The one utters his own sentiments; the other makes the words merely a vehicle of music. The one addresses God; the other amuses himself.

What a contrast does the eye of heaven look down upon in a religious assembly; the sincere and the formal worshipper before the Searcher of Hearts! The one is an angel struggling to reach its heavenly home, longing for freedom, grasping after its heavenly treasures, longing to meet its God. The other is a marble statue, an automaton moved by a foreign impulse; a worldly clinging to earth, and really wanting nothing more than the comfort of pride and the satisfaction of material good, and the benefits of human friendship shutting out all disturbance from the thoughts of the higher, asking only for a guaranty that selfishness and godliness here may not be incommoded hereafter. What a sight!—an unforgiven sinner before his God unmoved!

Let it be a settled point with those who feel the poverty and meagreness of worship, that the remedy is not a mechanical one. It is to be found, first of all, in a rich effusion of the Holy Ghost. Let us pray that our praying may honor God more, impress an unbelieving world more—not with the idea that we are good milliners, upholsterers, architects, scene painters, or musicians, but men in communion with God. All your repairs and amendments in the liturgical line will leave you poor imitators of effete systems. Watch the tree next spring, and see that inward life can put on the true forms of beauty which no council of artists could ever have invented.

Lord! teach us to pray and praise!
Help us to pray and praise!—*Observer*.

Surrender to the cross, and win an eternal crown!

THE BEST SIGHT.

"Thou art fairer than the children of men; grace is poured into thy lips; therefore God hath blessed thee for ever." (Psalm xlv. 2.)

It is well for us to have our hearts inditing a good matter, and to have our thoughts taken up with the things that concern the King. Maybe, while we are thus engaged, he may take us into his galleries, and show himself to us through the lattices. There we shall see for ourselves what here we only read of, the beauty of Christ, the grace of Christ, the joy of Christ.

Think of his *beauty*. "Thou art fairer than the children of men." This is not the beauty of external form, for then all men would have seen it, which we know they did not. As our hymn says:

"No earthly beauty shines in him,
To draw the carnal eye."

The evangelists speak nothing about his outward appearance. We know of Moses, that when he was born there was something about him that excited expectation; his parents saw that he was a proper child. David was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. But nothing of this kind is told us concerning Jesus. The only hint we have, is when the people, looking at him, exclaimed, "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" which would seem to imply, that though still young, his appearance was prematurely aged and worn. This corresponds with the description of Isaiah, who saw him in vision, and who speaks of him as having "no form nor comeliness, and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him." And again, "his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men." The truth is, that for our sakes he made himself of no reputation, and appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh. His glory was hidden, the world did not know him, they mocked and crucified him. His beauty was a spiritual beauty, and could therefore be only spiritually discerned. There was the *beauty of innocence*. We are all involved in Adam's guilt, we are conceived in sin, and brought forth in iniquity; but he had nothing of this, he was that holy thing, the fruit of the Holy Ghost, who was called the

Son of God. There was the *beauty of righteousness*. We have all a corrupt nature, from which proceeds, even from our earliest years, every form of actual sin, but he had a perfect nature, which manifested itself in a spotless and uninterrupted righteousness. There was the *beauty of love*. We are selfish, we seek our own things, regardless both of God and man; but he was incarnate love; he thought not of himself, but lived and died for the glory of God and the good of man. There was the *beauty of wisdom*. We are foolish, deceived, full of prejudice, and prone to err; but he grew in wisdom, in him were "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," he was the light of the world, he never erred, was never at a loss. See him stopping the mouths of gainsayers, breaking their snares, walking at liberty amid their machinations, and astonishing even his adversaries by the wisdom and authority with which he spake. There was the *beauty of meekness*. We are fretful and peevish; even Moses spake unadvisedly with his lips; but Jesus was meek, "he did not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street." "when he was reviled he reviled not again, when he suffered he threatened not." There was the *beauty of lowliness*. We are proud; perhaps this is the sin which most easily besets created natures, for we find it breaking out both in angels and men. But Jesus was lowly. Though he was the greatest and highest of all, yet he humbled himself, and ever walked softly both with God and man. There was the *beauty of patience*. In suffering, if it be severe, or long continued, we faint, and murmur, and complain. But though there was no sorrow like unto his sorrow, yet he bore it with unfailling patience: "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." Yes, all true beauty meets in him. Those whose eyes are opened, and who see him in the light of the Holy Ghost, cry, "Thou art fairer than the children of men; he is the chiefest of ten thousand, and altogether lovely." All that is best and fairest in nature is gathered together to set forth his beauty:—the Rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the valley; as the apple-tree among the trees

of the wood; the bright and morning star; the Sun of righteousness; the Lamb of God, and yet the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Happy they who thus see the King in his beauty. Is this your happiness? Have your eyes been opened? Can you say, There was a time when I saw no beauty, no desirableness in him; when such books as *Rutherford's Letters* were incomprehensible and thoroughly distasteful. But all this is changed—he has shone into my soul, he has riveted my attention, he has fascinated my heart.

Is it thus, indeed, with you? Then thank God for it. Hail! thou highly favored, blessed art thou among men—blessed art thou among women. You may well say—

O! to grace how great a debtor,
Daily I'm constrain'd to be;
Let this grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to thee.

Are you bringing forth the fitting fruits of such amazing mercy? Are you seeing and realizing your own vileness, in the light of his beauty; and are you abhorring yourselves, ceasing from yourselves, and seeking to be found only in him? Are you turning from all other glories, as poor and passing, counting all things lost in comparison with the knowledge of Christ? Are you rising from his works to himself? and whispering in your heart, as page after page of nature's volume is unrolled before you. If these things are so great and fair—that shining firmament, these flowers of the field—what must He be, in whom all is, from whom all comes, and by whom all is upheld? Are you thus growingly taken off from all, and your heart deliberately, eternally fixed on the Lord? Do you find that being with him, and seeing him by faith, you are transformed and changed into his likeness? and are you saying, Let me, the old man, decrease; but let him, the Lord of glory, increase, and so let that word be growingly fulfilled. "He shall beautify the meek with salvation," until that blessed and longed-for day arrives, when I shall behold his face in righteousness, and shall be satisfied when I awake with his likeness?

But think of the *grace* of Christ. What is grace? It is kindness and favour to the sinful and undeserving. It was a new

thing in the government of God. He richly endows his creatures when he forms them; but if they fall they perish. Thus it had hitherto been. But now God was to bring forth a new thing, and to show mercy and kindness even to the fallen and sinful. Where sin abounded, grace was much more to abound; and where sin had reigned unto death, grace was to reign through righteousness unto eternal life. Where men had destroyed themselves, God himself was to become their help. The fountain of grace is in God—the three-one God. It springs up in his heart, and flows forth as a mighty overcoming river. But Christ is the channel. Grace could not reach us but by him. Christ is the receptacle—it all dwells, is all treasured, up in him. He is the impartor or dispenser of grace: we can never get it but from him. "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest ask of him, and he would give thee living water." He is full of grace, and he gives it freely. Grace is ever flowing, dropping from him. There is grace in his birth—"Behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy," grace in his life, for in it he fulfilled all righteousness; grace in his death, for he thus finished the transgression, and rolled away the stone from the well's mouth; grace in his every word: in his doctrines—God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son; in his parables—I am the vine, the door, the good shepherd, the bread of life; in his promises—Come unto me and rest; in his precepts—Abide in me, and I in you; in his prayers—I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter; in his sympathy—Able to be touched with a feeling of our infirmity; in his government—Making all things work together for his people's good; in his constant presence—Lo, I am with you always; in his seasonable, effectual succour—My grace is sufficient for thee. Those who heard him, exclaimed—Never man spake like this man. Men wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. Grace was poured upon his lips: it was ever dropping, flowing, shining forth from him. It was this that made him so winning and attractive. The publicans and sinners gathered around him.

The sorrowful, afflicted, broken-hearted flocked where he was. Even the little children could not be held back from him. Natural physiognomists as they are, they instinctively felt that they were welcome, and that it was good to draw near to him. Friends, do you see this? do you feel it? do you keep near him? do you expect good from him? and do you get it? Of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace. Let us beg it out by prayer—let us draw it out by faith. The Father is saying, "Kiss ye the Son;" let us cry, Lord, "kiss me with the kisses of thy mouth, for thy love is better than wine."

But think of the joy of Christ. "Therefore God hath blessed thee for ever." Christ was infinitely, eternally blessed. He says, "Before the mountains were brought forth, ere ever he had formed the earth and the heavens, then I was with him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him." This was true joy; for it was joy in and with God. He was also happy in the possession and enjoyment of that vast, varied, rich universe, which he had made and upheld. Yet he left all this, became poor, a man of sorrows, forsaken by all; it pleased the Lord to bruise him. He impoverished himself that we might be rich; he died that we might live; and just on the ground of this great and disinterested self-sacrifice, God hath given him back more than his former joy. He is anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows; he has received gifts from men, even the rebellious. He has power to give eternal life to whom he will. And what is eternal life? Not eternal existence—lost men have that; lost spirits have that; and they would gladly denude themselves of it if they could. But eternal life is an eternal happy existence, spent in glorifying and enjoying God. He has found this way of life himself, and he invites us to join him in it. Come and walk in this path of life, and then seek to draw others after you.—*British Messenger*.

In youth we use whip and spur to make time travel the faster, but when age cometh upon us we would fain employ the curb to diminish its speed.

HARVEST TIME.

BY REV. J. P. KIMBALL.

THIS is a spiritual harvest time. Who doubts it? It does not come just so many months after the good seed has been sown. We must look around us and see when the fields are ripe, and when the time has fully come for us to thrust in the sickle and reap.

What then are the signs of the times just now? We notice with pain that the Lord's garner is comparatively empty. Our churches are not so large as they should be, and by far the larger proportion of their members are those who are advanced in life. In the natural course of events they must soon leave us. Multitudes are standing aloof who should be coming in to take their places. They are often respectful to religion, and ready to help support the Gospel, but they do not come out boldly and say "as for me and my house we will serve the Lord." How many heads of families there are who do not feel prepared to give any religious instruction to their children, who rear no family altar, and who, by their actions are throwing their influence in favor of a life devoted to the present world. Must it be that these men and women, whom we respect and love, shall never be of any service in the Church of Christ, shall never give their hearts to the Saviour? Shall they go down to their graves while yet it must be said, "One thing thou lackest?" Unless there be a great ingathering and that speedily, those who have reached and passed middle life without a change of heart, will continue as they are, and go, in quiet and unconcern, on to the grave and to the judgment-seat of Christ. Then, too, the youth will lose the golden season of probation, their hearts will grow hard and many of them will lie down in sorrow.

What a harvest waves before us! How many precious souls ought to be gathered in! What parish does not need the blessing! What a need there is that every Christian should labor to save souls.

Every thing is ripe for Christian effort.

The good seed has been faithfully sown for many generations, and surely it is time to look for fruit. The terrible war which

has been desolating our land is at an end. God's providence, as it has been so clearly marked, that the thoughts of men in an unwonted degree have been turned toward their Maker. We are not tortured with anxiety as we were a few months ago. And we begin to feel a sense of obligation to God for his sparing mercy. More than this, there has been a general conviction that peace would be followed by extensive revivals of religion, that the whole country would feel the Holy Spirit, and that there would be a great turning unto God, and already we have abundant evidence that God is not disposed to withhold the blessing. From the East and from the West we receive tidings that the Holy Spirit has been poured out sometimes in a wonderful manner. Men are everywhere thoughtful, and are feeling that the time has come when, if ever, they are to enter the kingdom of heaven.

Christians, too, are conscious of a greater burden of desire for the conversion of men than they have been wont to feel. God is stirring up many mothers in Israel to pray more fervently for those who are yet in their sins. All things are ripe for a great and glorious work, if the people of God only have the heart to enter upon it.

The future prospects of Christ's Church in our land depend very much upon what is now done.

Already there are conceited men who tell us that the Church has almost lost its influence in the nation, and who think that the doctrines which our fathers took from the Word of God have become too antiquated for the "ear of this generation." The Holy Spirit must send home the Gospel with power to the hearts of men, or they will, in great multitudes, close their ears against it. We need the influence of many thousands more of earnest, devoted Christians in the great work of promoting future revivals, in sending up to heaven a volume of prayer which shall secure to us the constant presence of the Holy Spirit. Can we do without such precious influences? Has not the time fully come for us to thrust in the sickle and reap? Such seasons, if not improved, are soon gone forever. The winter sets in, rain, and frost, and snow, beat down and destroy the grain and soon the day in

which it might have been saved is gone forever. All the hopes of the husbandman are blighted, and he can only weep over that which is lost beyond all hope of recovery. How inexpressibly sad, if through our short-sightedness and want of spiritual life, precious souls must by-and-by take up the bitter lamentation, "The harvest is past, the Summer is ended, and we are not saved."

How then can Christians be successful laborers in God's harvest?

We must place ourselves fully at his disposal.

Turning away from every sin, we must lay a broken and contrite heart upon God's altar. And as we bow humbly before the throne of grace, and feel the love of Christ swelling within our souls, each one must cry, "Here am I, send me." If we let the Holy Spirit take full possession of our hearts, God can consistently use us as instruments of mercy to others. When the astonished Saul cried from the depths of a penitent spirit, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do!" then God made him a chosen instrument to bear salvation to the Gentiles.

We must be fervent in prayer.

Until Christians are ready to plead with God and give him no rest, they cannot expect the blessing in its fulness. It is not enough for us to say that we should be glad to see God's work revived. There must be a burden of prayer upon our souls. We must entreat our Heavenly Father to have mercy, and in proportion to the magnitude of the boon we crave must we agonize in prayer. When we are "full of the Holy Spirit and of faith" and "cry mightily" unto God, then it is that "much people" is "added unto the Lord."

We must testify to the truth and power of the Gospel.

We are witnesses for Christ, showing forth the power of his salvation, and if our testimony is feeble, if we are unwilling witnesses, if in our families, among our companions, in the prayer-meeting, in fact everywhere, if we do not stand up for Jesus, we are not doing all we can to bring men to Christ.

We must labor with our friends and personally lead them to the Saviour.

Now they are glad to have some one

care for their souls. We may sometimes meet with rebuffs, but the weakest Christian who, with a soul lifted up in prayer to God and with a tearful earnestness, will labor personally for the conversion of souls, will meet with a success that shall seem perfectly wonderful. Simple, unpretending words, coming from the heart, when they are sent home by the Holy Spirit, have power to melt down the flinty rock.

If we are not already in this work, has not the time come for us to enter it? Is there any other labor that is more important? Can we, in any other way, secure so glorious a record? Should not every minister and every private Christian pray for grace that he may be wise to win souls, that he may have strength to lay himself a living sacrifice upon God's altar, and then toil with all his might to gather souls into the garner of the Lord. We believe the harvest time has fully come, and how we should be spurred on to effort by the glorious thought that when the Saviour beckons us to our eternal home we may have many sheaves to be our "glory and joy" in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming.—*Boston Recorder.*

"PERPETUAL MOTION."

Some twenty years ago, there was a shop-boy in Dublin, known at first as Johnny Morgan, but afterwards called "Perpetual Motion." He had learned the worth of his own soul, and so had learned the worth of other souls. Every Sabbath morning, therefore, he was to be seen running from door to door in Mountjoy Square, that he might collect the members of an Adult Bible class. He never stopped, till, like a shepherd's dog, he had found all his stray sheep, and brought them once more under the Shepherd's watch and care.

What became of that boy? Did he cease at length to labour for the salvation of men? Having begun to run well did he faint in the race? No. That same "Perpetual Motion" was afterwards transferred to a missionary field. His activity was first seen in the humbler efforts of a catechist. And when the catechist had

purchased a "good degree," it was exhibited in the labours of a successful missionary.

What was the secret of his usefulness? Just this, and nothing more: whenever the question arose, in respect to any service which he could perform, "Who will do it?" he said, "I will do it." Reader! would you learn how you can do much for Christ and for precious souls? Be always ready to say, when any service in your power is needed, "I will do it."

YOUR MISSION.

If you cannot on the ocean,
Sail among the swiftest fleet,
Rocking on the highest billows,
Laughing at the storm you meet;
You can stand among the sailors,
Anchored yet within the bay,
You can lend a hand to help them,
When they launch their boats away.

If you are too weak to journey
Up the mountains steep and high,
You can stand within the valley
While the multitude go by;
You can chant the happy measures
As they slowly pass along,
Though they may forget the singer,
They will not forget the song.

If you have not gold and silver
Ever ready at command,
If you cannot toward the needy
Reach an ever-open hand,
You can visit the afflicted,
O'er the erring you can weep,
You can be a true disciple,
Sitting at the Saviour's feet.

If you cannot in the harvest,
Garner up the richest sheaves,
Many a grain, both ripe and golden,
Will the careless reaper leave.
You can glean among the briars,
Growing rank against the wall,
For it may be that their shadow
Hides the heaviest wheat of all.

Do not then stand idly waiting,
For some greater work to do;
Fortune is a lazy goddess,
She will never come to you—
Go and toil in any vineyard;
Do not fear to do or dare;
If you want a field of labor,
You can find it anywhere.

Humility attracts the eye and heart of God himself. Job was never more accepted of God, than when he *abhorred himself.*

LESSONS FROM NERO'S HOUSEHOLD.

BY THE REV. J. C. RYLE, B.A., ENGLAND.

Lessons from Nero's household! How strange that sounds. The master of that household was a bad man, if ever there was one. Nero, the Emperor of Rome, was a very proverb for cruelty, profligacy, tyranny, and wickedness of every description. Yet this is the man to whose household the Bible sends us for instruction!

Lessons from Nero's household! It seems almost incredible. In the households of Abraham, or Moses, or Samuel, or Daniel, or Sergius Paulus, or Gaius, or Stepphans—in such households we might well expect there was something to be learned. But who would ever dream of lessons from the household of the worst emperor that ever ruled over Imperial Rome?

But what are these lessons? and where are they to be found? They are to be found at the end of one of St. Paul's epistles. They form almost the last words which the great Apostle of the Gentiles wrote to his beloved Philippian church when he was a prisoner at Rome. He had probably dipped his pen in the ink for the last time, when he put down those simple words, "All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Cæsar's household" (Phil. iv. 22.)

I frankly confess that I have long read that verse with deep interest. I am one of those old-fashioned people who believe that every word of Scripture is given by inspiration of God; and that every verse is full of instruction, if we had only eyes to see it. I see in the verse before us two weighty lessons, which I should like to impress on every reader's mind. Who these saints were we are not told. Their names, their rank, their history, their difficulties, their work, their lives, their deaths, all are completely hidden from our eyes, and we shall know nothing more till the last day. We only know that there were "saints" in Nero's household, and that they were courteous saints. Out of these two facts we will draw two lessons.

We see then, for one thing, in Nero's household, the *almighty power of our*

Lord Jesus Christ. He could enable people to be Christians even in Nero's palace. By the grace of the Holy Spirit, which he planted in their hearts, he could give them power to be "saints" in the most unfavourable position that mind can conceive. With the Lord Jesus nothing is impossible; nothing is too hard for Christ's grace.

There is something to my mind most important in this lesson. It ought to come home with power to all who live in great towns. It ought to ring in their ears like a trumpet every day they live. It is possible to be a saint in a great city!

Great cities and towns, as a general rule, are most unfavourable places to a man's soul. Those who live in London, Manchester, Liverpool, or Glasgow, know that very well. The whirl of business in which every one seems to move, the incessant hurry to be rich in which all seem to be rushing along, the intense struggle to "get on," which seems to be the absorbing thought in everybody's mind—all this seems to make religion nearly an impossibility. Let a believer walk through Cheapside or the Strand, in an afternoon—let him mark the careworn faces that he will meet at every step—faces in which money, money—business, business—is so plain that you could almost fancy you saw it—and if he does not ask himself, "How can the soul thrive here?" I shall be much surprised.

Now, if this be true of towns in Christian countries, what must be said of towns in heathen lands? What can we imagine more trying to the soul than the position of a Christian at Rome?

A believer at Rome would have all those trials which are the portion of the household of faith in every age—the trials which you and I find it so hard to bear—an evil heart, an ensnaring world, and a busy devil.

But a believer at Rome would have trials over and above these, of which you and I, living in quiet England, by God's mercy, know nothing.

He would live in a city where he might expect persecution any day, and where the name of Christ was scarcely known, and if known despised.

He would live in a city where idolatry was the fashion, where the temples of false gods would meet his eye on every side, where the mere fact of not bowing down to dumb idols would be an unusual thing.

He would live in a city where the gospel standard of morality was utterly sneered at; where the excellence of truth, purity, meekness, and gentleness would be unknown.

And yet, in spite of all this, God had a people at Rome. Here, in the midst of the darkest superstition and idolatry—here, in the midst of immorality and profligacy, the grace of God was proved all-powerful. Even here there was a church which could value the longest epistle Paul ever wrote. Even here there were "saints in Nero's household."

Can any one of us imagine the difficulties of a Christian in Nero's household? I suspect not. I believe that in a Christian country like this, amidst all the insensible restraints and benefits of Scriptural religion, we can scarcely have the faintest conception of a heathen emperor's household eighteen hundred years ago.

We should have seen justice, purity, and truth daily trodden under foot. We should have had around us hundreds who neither knew nor valued the sixth and seventh commandments. Our eyes would have been saddened by fearful sights, and our ears tortured by vile and defiling words. And even if our souls escaped damage, our lives and liberty would have been in constant peril. We might have felt every morning when we rose from our beds, "There is but a step between me and death." Yet even in a position like this the grace of God triumphed. By the grace of God there were saints even in Nero's household.

The grace of God can make a man a Christian anywhere, in any position, under any circumstances, however unfavourable those circumstances may seem to be; and not only make him but keep him so too. It can give him power to follow the Lord aloof, while all around him are following sin and the world. It did so for Daniel at Babylon, for Obadiah in Ahab's court, for Lot in the midst of Sodom and Gomorrah, and for the saints in Nero's household.

It can enable a man to serve God amidst a family of ungodly relations. It can call him out and make him a witness for Christ, while all his kindred are walking in the broad way. It did so for Jonathan, the son of Saul, for Abigail, the wife of Nabal, for Josiah, the son of Amon.

It can enable a man to serve God in the most dangerous professions. It can keep him unspotted, while all around him are defiled. It did so for Cornelius the centurion in the Roman army, and for Zenas the lawyer.

I know the thought that is in many hearts. I know you fancy your position in life prevents your being a decided Christian. You say to yourself, "Had I a different master, or a different dwelling, different fellow-servants, or different friends, a different position in life, or different children, then I would serve the Lord." I warn you against this delusion. I tell you, it is not change of condition that you want, but grace.

It is not learning, nor money, nor the favour of the rich, nor the company of the saints, nor plenty of privileges; it is none of these things that makes a Christian. It is the grace of God that is wanted, and nothing else. It is the work of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost in the soul.

When the Spirit comes into a man's heart, he will be a Christian, notwithstanding any disadvantages. I defy the world, the flesh, and the devil, to keep him back. He will follow Christ, glorify God, and be saved, in spite of them all.

Till the Spirit comes into a man's heart he will never be a Christian, however great his privileges. No! not though he be servant to a prophet—Gehazi served Elisha. No! not though he be companion to a man after God's own heart—Joab was always with David. No! not though he be an apostle and a friend of apostles—Demas went about with Paul, and Judas followed Christ. Without grace no man ever will serve the Lord.

It is grace, grace, nothing but grace, that makes a Christian. You that would be saved remember this. Let this be your first step, your starting-point—Come to the Lord Jesus Christ, and ask for grace.

After studying human nature for twenty-four years as a minister, I feel that I ought to know something of it. I believe that one grand reason why many never take up decided religion is a dread of the difficulties connected with it. You say to yourselves "It is no use; I never can alter; I never can break off from my old ways; I never shall be saved." I charge you, and entreat you, not to give way to such notions. I tell you that the grace of God can do anything. With grace nothing is impossible.

I have learned never to despair of any one as long as he lives, and is within the reach of the Gospel. I may see no change in many at present. I may die and see little or nothing done. But still I will hope on. I shall hope to meet in glory, at Christ's appearing, many of those who now walk in the broad way. They may be far off, but grace can yet bring them in; they may seem hardened, but grace can make them tender as a weaned child.

I do not despair of hearing that the most careless have learned that "one thing is needful"—the most formal, that baptism and church-membership are useless unless a man becomes a new creature—the most self-righteous, that other foundation but Jesus no man can lay—the most scoffing, to delight in nothing so much as prayer.

I cannot despair with this verse of Scripture before me. I read this little sentence. I remember what Rome was. I remember what Nero was, and yet I see what grace can do. So long as I live I must and will hope on.

We see, for another thing, in Nero's household, a *bright example of Christian courtesy*. Many as the trials of these saints must have been, countless as their daily vexations and distractions, they did not forget to think of others. They had large and sympathising hearts. They remembered their brethren and sisters at Philippi, though, perhaps, they had never seen them in the flesh. And so, when they heard that the great Apostle of the Gentiles was writing to the Philippian church, they took care to send a kind message: "All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Cæsar's household."

There is something to my mind inexpressibly beautiful in this little message.

It gives me a most pleasant idea of the ways and manners of the early Christians. It shows me that there was nothing rough, and hard, and stern, and harsh, and austere about their Christianity. Oh, no! They were a feeling, warm-hearted, loving, genial, considerate people. They were not entirely taken up with themselves and their own duties, crosses, conflicts, and trials. They could think of others.

Courtesy and consideration for others are Christian graces which receive far less attention than they ought to have. All like to be remembered by others, even if it is only in the postscript of a letter. None like to be altogether forgotten. "Little attentions," as people call them, are anything but little in reality; and that man knows little of human nature who fancies they are of no importance. None are above being pleased by them, whatever they may profess to the contrary. Courtesy, and civility, and manners may doubtless be made too much of; but, for all that, they are not to be despised. They are everything with some, and they are something with all. The Christians of the New Testament day did not despise them, neither should we.

I fear there is a fault among Christians in this matter. Some behave in such a manner that one might fancy they thought it a Christian duty to be rude. But they have utterly mistaken the spirit of the Gospel when they act so; and I tell them so now.

There is no true religion in rudeness. A man who is led by the Spirit ought to be more courteous and polite than others. "What do I more than others?" should be his question. Certainly not, "What do I less?" He will have within him the roots of all true courtesy—humility and charity. He will be lowly in his own eyes, willing to count every one better than himself, and more worthy of honour, attention, and respect. He will be ready to take the lowest place, if need be. He will not be always thinking of self, self's ways, self's desires, and self's wishes; his great aim will be to make others comfortable and happy. Selfishness and pride are the two chief enemies of courtesy, and they are feelings to which a real Christian should feel ashamed to give way. Read-

er, depend upon it, to be uncivil and uncourteous is no mark of grace.

Do we seek for examples of courtesy and condescension in the Bible? Let us study the conduct of Abraham, as recorded in Gen. xiii. See how he gives Lot the choice of the land:—"If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left." Lot was a much younger man than himself, and could have found no fault if he had been left to take what Abraham rejected. Lot had no promise of the land for his inheritance, and had received no special marks of God's favour. Yet Abraham treats Lot as the most deserving of the two, declares himself willing to make any sacrifice, and is ready to make any arrangements by which peace and good feeling may be kept up between them. And he lost nothing by it at last. God loves to honour practical charity and humility.

Do we ask for another example of courtesy? Let us study the character of the Apostle Paul. Let us mark how he frequently sends kind messages to individuals in the epistles that he writes to the churches. Amidst the constant thought and attention which the care of churches demanded—with all the anxieties of doctrinal and practical questions coming daily upon him—trouble on one side by Corinthian immorality, on another by Galatian false teaching, on a third by Hebrew scruples—who, I say, would have expected an apostle to remember so many persons, and to have sent them so many kind messages as are recorded in the last chapter of the Epistle to the Romans? And he reaped his reward. No wonder that Christians loved him tenderly, when they saw such largeness and sympathy of heart. No wonder that a great writer has called him "the most finished gentleman" the world has ever seen—the most complete combination of charity and humility.

I wish, with all my heart, that this subject received more attention than it does from the churches of Christ in the present day. I wish that Christians thought more of "adorning their doctrine," and making their religion lovely, beautiful, and attractive in the eyes of men.

I fear, even now, that many will think this lesson from Nero's household a matter of small importance. I fear that some reader is saying in his heart, "What waste of space is this! How much better to speak to us about inspiration or justification—about election, or grace, or the Millennium, or unfulfilled prophecy! Who knows not such things as these?" Reader, if this be your thought, I am sorry for you. I think you have much yet to learn.

I call nothing little in religion which may be practised every hour of the day. From morning to night there is always room for exercising Christian courtesy and consideration.

I call nothing little which tends to make religion more beautiful in the eyes of the world. Little arrangements make all the difference in the appearance of a room; little adornments make all the difference in the looks of a bride; little attentions make all the difference in the comfort a master feels in a servant. I am very jealous for my Master's cause. Anything, anything, to make it more lovely before man!

Cease, I beseech you, to think these things matters of little importance. The practice of them costs little, but the value of them, in the long run, is very great. A kindness of manner and demeanour—a readiness to sympathise with others, to weep with them that weep, and rejoice with them that rejoice—a forwardness to offer assistance when it seems likely to be wanted—a kind message in time of trouble, or a kind inquiry in time of sickness—all these may seem very small matters, but they are not so small as you think. They are not forgotten. They tend to increase your influence; they help to open a door of usefulness; they make people more willing to hear what you have got to say for your master's cause. When people see that you care for them, they are more disposed to care for you.

Reader, study to be courteous and considerate. Pray for grace to be so. No man is so by nature. Few children can shut a door behind them, without being desired, or say "if you please" unbidden, or "thank you" without being taught. By nature we are all for ourselves.

I leave the subject now to calm consideration. Circumstances, no doubt, make a difference. Early habits, peculiarity of temperament, a solitary life, forgetfulness of mind—all these are things that will have an influence. It seems more easy to some people to be courteous than it does to others. But that all professing Christians should aim at courtesy, I am fully persuaded. Well indeed would it be for the cause of Christ, if all Christians walked in the steps I have tried to trace in this paper, and were like the "saints in Nero's household."—*Quiver*.

THE MISSIONARY CHILD.

"I love the missionaries," said Sarah, as she dropped a penny into the family mission box. "Wouldn't you like to have me be a missionary, mother?"

"If you are prepared, my child," answered her mother.

A little girl with a basket in her hand came loitering down the road. Her dress was faded and ragged; she had an old black hood on her head which did not hide her tangled hair, and her bare feet were almost black with dirt. Her father was a drunkard, and her mother a sickly, shiftless woman. Nancy was now on her way to school. "There is a little girl that needs a missionary," said Sarah's mother, who sat at the window.

"Who, mother?" asked Sarah, running to look out. "Oh, Nancy?"

"Yes," said her mother. "The poor girl needs the heart of a missionary to love her and do her good. And a child of pity and sympathy and self-denial would, I think, be the best missionary for her.—Children like to learn of each other, and love springs up quick between them."

"Why, she is a very hateful girl," said Sarah, "the worst in the school; nobody can go with her."

"I thought she was in great need," said her mother.

"Could I do anything for her," do you suppose?" asked Sarah.

"Any one who has the heart for it can do good."

"I am sure I want to do good," said Sarah, as she ran for her sun-bonnet and

books. She plucked a branch of roses as she passed through the gate, and then joined Nancy on her way to school.

"Good morning, Nancy," she said as she came up to her.

Nancy was unused to attention, or even civility, and looked up surprised.

"Isn't it a pleasant morning?" said Sarah.

"Humph! I don't know," said Nancy. Sarah offered her a fine rose, saying, "See how sweet it is."

Nancy was pleased with it, for there are few children who do not like a sweet-smelling flower, and whose little hearts do not smile at the sight of one. "Your folks have got a great many roses, hav'n't they?" she said. "I wish ours had.—Once I had a root, and father trod on it and broke it down."

"My mother'll give you plenty of roots in the fall, if you want them," said Sarah.

"Mother says it's of no use; nothing'll grow for us."

"You might have a root in a box, and put it in some place where it would not be disturbed. I'll give you a pretty little rose-bush in a box next season if you'll water it."

"Guess I could do that," said Nancy, smiling, and putting back her uncombed locks under her hood.

A beautiful, bright-feathered bird sang merrily on a tree by the roadside. "See that beautiful bird," exclaimed Sarah.—"How lovely every thing is."

"I'll make him fly," said Nancy, with a roguish look, as she stooped to pick up a stone.

"O, don't," said Sarah; "you might kill him."

"No I won't, but I'll scare the rascal."

"O, don't. How can you make him afraid when he is so happy, and singing so sweetly for us? God takes care of every little bird."

"How do you know?" said Nancy.

"Jesus himself said that a sparrow falleth not to the ground without him."

When Sarah entered the school-room, she bade the teacher a pleasant good-morning, and Nancy had already felt enough of good influence to follow her example. "Good-morning; I am glad to see you in good season," answered the

teacher encouragingly, and Nancy felt a self-respect quite new to her.

At noon she was at some of her old tricks, snatching the girls' bonnets, throwing them in the dirt, and upsetting their dinner baskets, because they would not play with her; so Sarah left her own quiet play, and offered to see-saw with her, to sooth and keep her out of mischief. The other girls wondered at this, not knowing that Sarah had a good thing at heart for her.

After school, she said to Nancy, "Come along early to school to-morrow, wont you."

"Why?" Nancy asked.

"I sha'n't tell you now," said Sarah, laughing.

Nancy's curiosity was excited, and she came early the next day. Sarah was watching for her at her own gate, and was glad to see that her feet had been half-washed and her hair half-combed.— She had one of her own sun-bonnets in readiness, and gave it to her, saying, "Your hood is too warm." Nancy smiled, and handed her a wild-flower she had plucked by the way. She had not learned to say "thank you" in words, still her heart could express the new and pleasant feeling of gratitude.

And in such quiet little ways as we have told, Sarah tried to do Nancy good without embarrassing her and giving her pain, and it was not long before she had a strong influence over her. Nancy was one of the poorest scholars in the school. She could not read at all, and was in the lowest class in spelling. She now took a part in learning; and when at her lesson, if she caught Sarah's eye fixed on her with interest, she tried her best.

Sarah knew well that decency of looks, and kindness of manner, and diligence in study, are but little in comparison with true excellence of character and the conversion of the heart to God, and Nancy was very ignorant of God and his requirements.

Sarah wanted her to go to Sabbath-school, but Nancy's mother said "it was too long to walk there for her to go, and she hadn't clothes fit; besides she wanted her to take care of the children, for Sabbath was the only day she got; and more than all, t'wa'n't no use to go to Sabbath-

school." Sarah talked with her mother, and planned to have a little Sabbath-school of her own after church, and have Nancy come to it and bring all her brothers and sisters along with her, so that her mother could not complain. Her own younger brothers and sisters were to make up the school.

So Nancy began to learn of Christ and his wonderful life, and her heart was melted within her at the story of his love and his death. "Oh, I love Him!" was her simple expression, as the tears rolled down her cheeks.

Was not Sarah a missionary child to the poor, neglected Nancy? Are there no other missionary children, and is there no other work for them to do? Have they looked around to find out the forgotten and the perishing?

WINGS, SOME DAY.

Passengers on board of one of the many ferryboats that are constantly plying between the opposite shores of the Mersey, may occasionally see on warm bright days a poor cripple boy, whose body has grown to almost a man's size, but whose limbs withered and helpless, are still those of a child.

He wheels himself about on a small carriage, similar to that the boys use in play; and while the little boat threads its way among the ships of all nations that are anchored in the river, he adds not a little to the pleasure of the sail, by playing on his "concertina" airs that show no mean degree of musical skill. The few pennies that he always receives, but does not ask for, are never grudgingly bestowed, and are given not more in pay for the music, than for the simple honesty that shines in the boy's blue eyes.

One so helpless, it would seem, could only be a burden to those who loved him, could certainly do nothing toward fulfilling the command, "Bear ye one another's burdens." Was it so? Was there no service of love for the lame boy? No work for him in the vineyard? The question was answered one day.

"Walter," said a gentleman who had often met him, "how is it, when you cannot walk, that your shoes get so worn out?"

A blush came over the boy's pale face, but after hesitating a moment, he said:—

"My mother has younger children, sir, and while she is out washing, I am:use them by creeping about on the floor and playing with them."

"Poor boy!" said a lady standing near, not loud enough, as she thought, to be overheard, "what a life to lead; what has he in all the future to look forward to?"

The tear that started in his eye, and the bright smile that chased it away, showed that he did hear her. As she passed by him to step on shore he said in a low voice, but with a smile that went to her heart—

"I'm looking forward to having wings some day, lady!"

Happy Walter! Poor cripple, and dependant on charity, yet doing, in his measure, the Master's will, and patiently waiting for the future, he shall by and by "mount up with wings as eagles; shall run and not be weary; shall walk and not faint."—*Congregationalist*.

MY EARLY LESSON.

I once had a little sister, but she died when I was five years old. The grief of losing her sank deep into my heart; and weeks went by before I could be happy in the play-room, where we had so often been together, or could endure the sight of her little books or toys.

Often I stole away alone to the churchyard where she lay, and sat for hours near the little mound that covered her pretty form; for I did not feel so lonely when I sat beside her there.

I had always been a quiet child; but this sore trouble completely took away my spirits, and made me almost ill. At last my parents became alarmed for my health and proposed to take me to the seaside.— But I begged so hard to remain near my little sister, and was so unhappy at the thought of leaving her, that at last they let me stay.

"Dear boy," my mother said, "our little Teddy is not coming back just now. God will not just now bring her body out of the ground. He has her soul safe up in heaven with Him. If you love Jesus, God will take your soul up there too, and

then you will see dear Teddy. When the right time comes, God will raise up your body and Teddy's."

"Must I go into the ground too? And will I come out all bright like Teddy?"

"Yes, my boy."

"But, mamma, I don't see *how*. How can it ever be?"

My mother opened her hand and showed me a little seed which she held there. She bade me take that little seed and bury it in the ground. She said that God meant to have the seed buried in that way, so that after a time it might grow up and make beautiful flowers; that God could take care of it in the ground, and not forget it. She told me that when our friends died, and we had to lay them down in the ground, God liked to have us feel quite sure that He could take care of them, and would not forget them. And He liked to have us feel sure of seeing them again some day.

Every day I loitered for hours about the spot where I had buried the seed, and even brought my book and studied my little lesson there. I felt as if upon the coming up of that plant depended the raising of my little sister; that if my mother's words proved true about the seed, I should have a sure prospect of some day seeing little Teddy again.

At last one morning, after a very rainy night, I went out, and saw, to my intense delight, two small green leaves peeping above the ground, just where I had buried my seed.

To this day I can remember the thrill of joy at that sight. It was not merely delight at finding that I was to have a flower of my own; but to my childish heart it seemed like an assurance, straight from heaven, that my little Teddy would be taken care of and given back to me again.

Now I was happier than I had been for many weeks, and as the plant grew and blossomed my trust in God's power grew stronger, till at length all the heavy weight of sorrow was lifted from my heart.

It was half a century ago that my plant bloomed and faded, but the hope its flowers brought me has never grown dim, and I thank God daily for that hope of the glorious morning of the resurrection.—

Early Days.

THE BLIND BOY.

BY REV. FRANCIS L. HAWKS, D.D., LL.D.

It was a blessed summer day,
The flowers bloomed, the air was mild;
The little birds poured forth their lay,
And everything in nature smiled.

In pleasant thoughts I wandered on
Beneath the deep wood's ample shade,
Till suddenly I came upon
Two children who had thither strayed.

Just at an aged birch-tree's foot
A little boy and girl reclined—
His hands in hers she kindly put,
And then I saw the boy was blind.

The children knew not I was near—
A tree concealed me from their view;
But all they said I well could hear,
And I could see all they might do.

"Dear Mary," said the poor blind boy,
"That little bird sings very long;
Say, do you see him in his joy?
And is he pretty as his song?"

"Yes, Edward, yes," replied the maid;
"I see that bird on yonder tree."
The poor boy sighed, and gently said:
"Sister, I wish that I could see."

"The flowers, you say, are very fair,
And bright green leaves are on the trees,
And pretty birds are singing there—
How beautiful for one who sees!

' Yet I the fragrant flowers can smell,
And I can feel the green leaf's shade;
And I can hear the notes that swell
From those dear birds that God has made.

"So, sister, God to me is kind,
Though sight, alas! he has not givou;
But, tell me, are there any blind
Among the children up in heaven?"

"No, dearest Edward, there all see—
But why ask me a thing so odd?"
"O Mary! he's so good to me,
I thought I'd like to look at God."

Ere long, disease his hand had laid
On that dear boy, so meek and mild;
His widowed mother wept and prayed
That God would spare her sightless child.

He felt her warm tears on his face,
And said; "Ob! never weep for me;
I'm going to a bright, bright place,
Where Mary says, *God I shall see.*

"And you'll be there, dear Mary, too;
But, mother, when you get up there,
Tell Edward, mother, that 'tis you—
You know I never saw you here."

He spoke no more, but sweetly smiled
Until the final blow was given,
When God took up that poor blind child,
And opened first his eyes in heaven.

"THAT BROUGHT ME."

In a pleasant rural town lived a well-to-do farmer, named Foster. At the time we write of him he had known few of the ills of life beyond that occasional petty disappointment of his plans and crossing of his purposes which a career of business brings to every man. His pastures and meadows were always green and sweet with fragrant feeding for his fat flocks and herds, and his productive fields brought him in wealth every year from willing markets. His family grew up around him in health; and as his years increased, and manhood strengthened into its prime, the neighbours spoke of him as of one high in their esteem; one whose character and opinions were worthy of general respect.

In the large and flourishing church of his native village, Mr. Foster had long been an honoured member, occupying a prominent pew, and contributing well to her charities; and days had been when her prayer-meetings saw him a faithful attendant, and when, better still for his own soul, the closet and the family altar gave witness to his daily visits, and his heart bore away tokens of God's approval, grateful as the summer rain.

But "the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches" had made sad havoc with Farmer Foster's piety. From an occasional neglect, he gradually passed to a habitual carelessness of religious duties till at length he became lost in the world, and forsook the church almost entirely.

Mr. Foster had a son eighteen years old, named Herbert, a young man of promise, who was pursuing a course of study in his native town. The heart of the father was bound up in the youth. In the days when religion had held Foster in the love of its gentle duties, he had prayed for Herbert's soul, and God had answered his prayer and converted him. His influence since had not been salutary upon the lad, and he had gone astray like his father, disappointing for a while the hopes and ambi-

tions entertained for him; but of late his course had brightened, and he had applied himself to his studies with a faithfulness that showed a new understanding of the work of life.

Returning one day from a trip, Herbert Foster left the train at some distance from his home, crossed the ferry, and walking rapidly all the way, arrived at his father's house, violently heated. Some lack of care in clothing himself when he went into the air again checked the perspiration of his body, and predisposed him to immediate disease. In that state he went among the students. At that time there was some sickness in the school, and by one of the opportunities of misfortune, Herbert was brought in contact with it. Immediately the fever seized him. There had been no fatal cases. It was not considered to be anything like a dangerous epidemic. But, with young Foster, the disease operated with a rapidity and virulence that likened it to a plague. On Friday morning he took to his bed; before Saturday night he died. A few brief words, spoken in delirium, were all the farewell he left. The father for a while would not be consoled. He remained like one in a maze through the solemn funerals. The tenderest sympathy of friends, the faithful and touching words of his minister, the parting at the grave, all fell alike upon his heart, like the clods upon the coffin, with a dull, muffled, painful blow. His strong, manly son, his child of promise, the hope of all his years, had been cut down ruthlessly before his eyes, and who could make good his loss?

They were many who mourned for young Foster, and pitied the father's grief. Whatever he had done to forfeit their sympathy, God would make him deserve it again, for in his loss the worldly man had gained a broken heart. In the long-vacant seat in the prayer-meeting, they looked and found him there again, as of old, and they heard him tell, as he rose to address the brethren there, how God had dealt with him.

"It is years since I was found in my place," he said. "I got astray little by little, until I was as one of the ungolly. By His goodness, the Saviour called me back and urged me to repentance, but I

did not listen. He blessed my family with wealth, but I would not turn from my hardness of heart. He gave me worldly prosperity, but still I would not seek him. 'Before I was afflicted I went astray.' At last He took my son, the hope of my life, away, and I was conquered. THAT BROUGHT ME!"

'Is there no reader, who, if he is "brought" at all, seems likely to need to be brought in some such way.

THE CHURCH A WONDER.

The existence of the Church in this wicked world is one of the wonders of Providence. It is a vessel living in a tempestuous sea—a bush on fire, but not consumed. If we reflect on the enmity of the wicked against the righteous—their great superiority over them—the attempts that have been made to exterminate them—the frequent diminution of their numbers by defection and death—their existence, and especially their increase, must be wonderful, and can no otherwise be accounted for but that Christ liveth.

When they were "few in number," and wandered as strangers from one nation to another, he suffered no man to hurt them. He reproved kings for their sakes, saying: "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm." In Egypt he saw their affliction, and came down to deliver them. Of Jerusalem the enemy said: "Raze, raze it to the foundation;" but the Lord remembered it, and destroyed its destroyer. Under the Persian dominion, the captives were restored to their own land; yet even then the enemy intrigued against them, so as that for one and twenty years the building of the temple was hindered; and the prayers of the Prophet Daniel were unanswered. Thus it was, I conceive, that "the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood the angel for one-and-twenty days; but lo, Michael, the chief prince, stood with him, and helped him."

Under the Gospel dispensation, as the Church became more spiritual, the hatred increased; and as religion was from hence more of a personal than a national concern, such was the opposition directed against it. But still the Great Head of the

Church lived. The persecution which raged at the time of which we speak was the second of the cruel persecutions from the heathen emperors; and though after this the government became professedly Christian, yet such were the corruptions which entered in at this door, that in a little time that which was called the Christian Church became an anti-Christian harlot, persecuting the servants of Jesus with a cruelty equal to if not superior to that of heathens. These floods filled the breadth of Emanuel's land, reaching even to the neck; but the Church's Head being above water, she has survived them all.—*Andrew Fuller.*

THE EVER-PRESENT HELPER.

"Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me."—PSALM L. 15.

Almighty God says this to us, to you and to me. What a comfort! What a blessing! We all know what "the day of trouble" means. For we have all had such days. Perhaps some of us are passing through a time of trouble *now*. At every such time God bids us call upon HIM.

Sometimes people call upon God in a *wrong* way. If any sudden stroke comes, or if anything greatly surprises them, they will cry, "O Lord!" or, "O my God!" But this may be only a vain, unmeaning, or even a wicked cry. They might just as well say anything else. *Nay better.* For it is taking God's name in vain to cry out so.

This "Call upon me," means something very different. It means, "Call upon me for help, for relief, for comfort, for all that you want in your trouble. Tell me what you feel, what you suffer, what you fear. Call upon me with the *heart*, not with the lips only. In the midst of your trouble, call upon me."

If you know anything of prayer, then you know that even to call upon God in the day of trouble is a comfort in itself. It soothes the mind, and gives us a happy feeling that God is not far off from us.

But there is more comfort in it than the mere feeling. For God says, "I will deliver thee." This is a promise, and God never breaks his promise. "Call upon

me;" that is what he bids us do: "I will deliver thee;" that is his promise to us. Not, perhaps, in the way we might expect; but in his own way, and that is always the best way. Whatever our trouble may be, however great, God says, "Call upon me, I will deliver thee."

Why are there so many troubled hearts, then? Why do so many go about with a load of care, as if God had never spoken such words?

Mostly because they do not really believe God. Some do not know him in their hearts. They have no acquaintance with him as a reconciled Father in Christ Jesus, and no experience of his love. Others do know God, but are weak in faith. They pray, but they do not pray in faith. They believe God's word in a general way, but they do not apply it simply and fully to their own case. They do not listen to God saying to them, "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee."

Yet some do believe these words, and find in them unspeakable comfort. In days of trouble they called upon God, and never in vain; he *has* delivered them. Therefore they praise him, and trust him. They glorify him for what he has done for them. They feel sure he will deliver them still. Never does a trouble come, but they call upon God. Never do they call upon him but they receive comfort.

Reader, this is what God would have you to do. He would have you know him as your Father in Christ Jesus. He would have you trust him and love him. In every day of trouble he would have you call upon *him* for help. He *promises* to help you.

SUCCESS.

What is the object for which we strive to educate our children? May I not reply in one word—*success*. Well, the next question is—*What is success?* This is not so easily answered. But certainly we are not successful in life's great enterprise unless we have found and accepted that position and work which the Author of our being designed us for. Paul says that he was "called," (that he was "appointed,") to be an apostle, that he was "separated unto the gospel." He intimates, in another place, that God designed that he should be an apostle from his infancy. And indeed, is it not true that there is

a part of the great vineyard inclosed or marked out, in which we each have our individual work, and where we are to gain the great object of life—*success*; by which labor and success we are to glorify God?

Are these the ideas of success which we hold out to our children, toward which we stimulate their ambition? Let us remember that life's best reward is not the attainment of simply what we *desire*, gaining for ourselves selfish ends. But it is to find and accept our true position and work.

Will it do for us to wait for the winds of chance to favor us? Must we wait for outward circumstances to bring about the accomplishment of our hopes? Well will it be for us to learn early in life that our success is to be the result of a wisely-directed effort, and that, under God's blessing, it will depend entirely upon our own skill and prudence.

And it is foolish to talk about *genius* and *talents* in such a way as to produce the impression that industry and application are less sure to secure success than natural gifts. Many a mind and heart has met with defeat and disappointment, because it trusted to the power of natural endowment and native graces. The patient and painstaking laborer is not only *worthy* of his hire, but he shall *receive* it. "Industry is a loadstone to draw all good things," says an old writer, and he adds, "the fertility of a country is not enough, except art and industry be joined unto it." There may be great natural advantages of location and climate; there may be the wealth of mines beneath its surface, but the unwearied hand of the laborer must work its material, and develop its hidden resources. Then let us not depend upon the gifts which a beneficent Creator has given us, but let us work with them. Let us "suffer no rude matter unwrought," but let us see to it that we make the most and best of ourselves. Not the most of ourselves in a *selfish* way, but in a useful and proper advance and improvement. Industry will enrich and improve our minds and souls as well as our houses and grounds! Little by little the waste and barren field will become fruitful, the power of our minds will be developed, and life, though full of work, will be full of satisfaction, and labor will find its reward in the ease with which it labors. The dream of our ambition ought not to be indolence and repose—but the free and easy working of all our powers, the full and active development of all our faculties in the enterprise for which God designed us.

We say, "The ambitious man succeeds." Why? Because *he* is the man who makes use of, avails himself of every opportunity

for advance and improvement. He is on the look-out for the places where he may securely set his feet, in the steep ascent up which he patiently though toilsomely pursues his way. But the indifferent, indolent, meanly-contented man makes no effort; closes his eyes to the future; shuts out the idea of progress, and desires no gain of intelligence, position, or of moral strength and beauty. It may be that chance will help us on toward success; but we ought to feel the value of opportunity, and be ready to embrace and use it.— Surely our anxiety and eagerness to reach that which seems to us the object of life will, if we are wise, make us prudent and diligent.

And it is sweet to enjoy that which we have obtained for ourselves. There is a satisfaction in having conquered difficulties; and that treasure which we have redeemed from the strength which would have kept it from us, is the dearest reward of life's work. With what delight does a man look over his acres which he has redeemed from sterility and barrenness! With what satisfaction does he use and enjoy the wealth which his industry has acquired!

But, alas! what can we do in our own strength? No matter how richly endowed with natural gifts we may be; no matter what persistence in effort we may maintain, we shall utterly fail unless we seek and obtain the help of God, whose work and will we are striving to accomplish. Let us not forget this in regard to our children, but in the midst of all their efforts, let us teach them that they are dependent upon God for their success. Let us not be ashamed to kneel with them, and to ask for them a spirit of intelligence and perseverance in each study they pursue, and in whatever they undertake. Was not our Saviour qualified for his work by the anointing of the Spirit? Oh, let us ask for the Spirit of the Lord to rest upon our children. Let us go with our sons and daughters into the presence of God, and be of Him that spirit of wisdom and understanding, that spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord, which they need. We exert upon them the influence of practical atheism if we do not teach them to go directly to God for help in the difficulties of their daily tasks. And let us also guard against a spirit of pride and self-satisfaction, when the honors that attend success are heaped upon them, by planting in their hearts a true spirit of humble dependence upon him who alone can give success.—*Mother's Magazine.*

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