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Monthly Messenger.

Edited by Rev. T. HALL, Congregational Minister, Queen's Road Chapel, St. John's.

NEW SERIES. VOL. IV. No. 9.

SEPTEMBER, 1877.

PRICE FIVE CENTS.

A MOTHERS' MEETING ADDRESS.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—This is my birthday, and, as I believe in good wishes, I want you all to wish me, not so much many happy returns of the day—for their number I am content to leave in the hands of God—as to wish and ask that I may be a holier woman in the coming year, if spared to live through it, than I have been in the past; more earnest and more useful in the cause of Christ, more successful in directing souls to Him; that in character and disposition I may be more gentle, more humble, more Christlike; that in all my ways, words, and works, my writings, my hundreds of letters, and my whole life I may speak for Him.

But some of you may say—"I can't do this, I don't know how to pray, I never prayed in my life." Never prayed! poor things! how much comfort and happiness you have missed! But 'tis never too late, when you find yourself on a wrong road, to turn round and make for the right, so 'tis never too late to pray; and be sure of this, God never turns a deaf ear to real prayer. Some of you have probably heard of the celebrated preacher, Rowland Hill, the minister of Surrey Chapel, whose name also lingers like the sweet scent of the violet, among the hills, dales, and villages of my lovely county of Gloucestershire. I think it was while ministering among the lovely scenery of Wotton under Edge, which he so much loved, that he had as a member of his church a very pious, respectable woman who was afflicted with a very ungodly husband. It happened that through an unfortunate turn in their business they were unable to pay their rent, and a man was put in possession of their goods. Driven to their wits' end to know how to find the money, the poor wife at last thought she would tell good Mr. Hill her trouble. He heard her very patiently, and then asked how much she needed. "Eighteen pounds," was the reply. "Then," said he, "I will give you twenty, and you can repay me at your convenience, but I should like to put the money into your husband's hands myself." The poor woman joyfully went home, and you may be sure was not long in sending her husband to such a benefactor. On his arrival, Mr. Hill addressed him something like this—"So you are so unfortunate as to have a man in possession, and twenty pounds will be really sufficient to get rid of him, and to save your furniture?" "It will, sir." "Then there are two ten-pound notes, and you can repay me when you are able." The man poured out his thanks, and began to take them. "Stop, stop a little," said Mr. Hill, "if you'll put them down, I'll ask a blessing on them." He then uttered a short prayer, standing with his hands over the money. The man then took them up, when Mr. Hill said, "My friend, you have not asked a blessing on them yourself; suppose you do it now."

"I can't, sir," said the man; "I think I never prayed in my life." "Quite time to begin, then." "I can't, sir, I don't know what to say." "Make an effort, however few the words may be." "I can't, sir; I am unable to utter a sentence." "Then you cannot have the money; I will not lend twenty pounds to a prayerless man." The man hesitated, then closing his eyes and lifting his hands, he said, with great earnestness, "Lord, what shall I say to Thee and Mr. Hill on this occasion?" He was about to say more when Mr. Hill stopped him, and said, "That will do for a beginning; that is a capital first prayer, for it is from the heart; take the money, and God's blessing go with it." From that time the man prayed, and soon became a sincere and humble Christian. Should there be a prayerless mother among you, I would say to her—Do as this man did, ask God to teach you what to say, and if you feel your *need* of His teaching, you will not ask in vain. An elderly woman, on being asked how old she was, replied, "Which birthday do you mean? If you mean my natural birth, when I was born into this world, I am sixty years old; but if you mean my spiritual birth, I am only two years old, for it was late ere I sought my dear Saviour." Have you ever thought, my friends, that God wills we should all have *three* birthdays? Our natural birth into this world of work and probation; our second birth, in which we are baptized of the Holy Spirit of God, and called from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light; and our third birth, when as Christians who have done and suffered the will of our Father on earth, we enter the inheritance of immortality and light prepared for us in heaven, to go no more out for ever—

"For ever with the Lord,
Amen, so let it be;
Life from the dead is in that word,
'Tis immortality.

Here in the body pent,
Absent from Him we roam;
Yet nightly pitch our moving tent
A day's march nearer home."

Oh! what a sad, sad pity that any should miss those two glorious birthdays; our Father willeth not that any should perish, and Jesus died to save. Why, then, will you perish? I entreat you to flee unto Jesus now, His arms are open to receive you, His ear ever ready to listen to your feeble cry for mercy and forgiveness. There is plenteous forgiveness with Him; haste, then, while the day of life lasts. To-morrow may be too late, for in the midst of life we are drawing near to death.

Only last Monday morning Mrs. Phillips, of ——— in full health of mind and body, gave her husband and numerous children their breakfast, and started them

to work and school. A little after eleven o'clock she was heard singing to her baby, and soon there was a heavy fall, and a neighbour in the next room went in and found her dying. She was very near her confinement with her eleventh child, and had been washing, and in hanging some clothes on a line she slipped from the chair on which she was standing, and fell on the upright post of an iron bedstead. The fearful injuries she sustained, and the shock to her system in her condition caused her death in a comparatively few minutes, for she was gone before twelve o'clock. A better wife or mother it would be difficult to find; her home was always nice, and, to use a neighbour's expression, "she kept her children like princes," though she washed, cooked, made, and mended for seven out of her eight children living, and trained them all in nice and orderly habits; yet she had to be father as well as mother to them, for her husband being a stonemason, is almost continually away from home for many months at a time, working in various parts of the country. One of her boys works for my dear husband, and during this sad week I have been giving him his tea, and have been struck with the nice way in which he takes it, taking off his cap and saying his grace in a way very different from most errand-boys. He is always clean, neat, and respectable, all showing the good training of the mother. Indeed, she was a pattern to all, always well and suitably dressed, no unnecessary flounces and trimmings, no long, dirty draggletail, sweeping the floors and dirty streets, but always plain and neatly dressed. Very provident and careful, too, was she; she was a member of the mothers' meeting at the Mission Hall opposite, and had there laid by £5 towards her coming time of need, little dreaming, poor dear, that that money would be used in helping to pay for her funeral. Hers was a short and sharp passage to the other world, singing to the baby, her only little girl, and within the hour, I trust, safe home with Jesus. Let it be a warning to all not to put off seeking Christ to a time of sickness, or a deathbed; you may have no time given you then. Now is the only time of which you may be sure. Now is the accepted time, let it be the time of your salvation. Flee to Christ at once for pardon and acceptance, that you may enjoy the three birthdays He wishes all to have. That I may meet you all in the better world, and share with you the glorious endless birthday in the presence of Jesus, is the earnest desire of

Your sincere well-wisher,

London.

H. D. ISACKE.

THE PLEASURE, AND THEN THE STING.

Young men often ask what harm there can be in a social, moderate glass of wine. It is certainly, they claim, a very agreeable way of passing a leisure hour. Undoubtedly they find the exhilaration of wine and jovial intercourse very agreeable, and it is upon this admitted fact that the counsel of my text is based—"Look not thou at the wine when it giveth its colour in the cup; at the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder."

Not at the first. Did it bite at the first, who would tamper with it? Did the sting come at the beginning of the indulgence, who would be led astray? But the pleasure comes at the first, and the sting at the last, and herein lies the danger of looking on the wine. At

the first it excites mirth and song, at the last it produces sorrow and curses. At the first it is an affair of good feeling and fellowship; at the last it is an affair of feuds, fighting, and murder. At the first it may kindle up the countenance to a more animated expression; at the last it gives redness of eyes and bloat and deformity to the visage. At the first it may quicken the intellect to unwonted activity, and impart a captivating brilliancy to the conversation; at the last it emasculates the mind of every element of strength, and degrades the conversation to the merest stammering of idiotic gibberish. At the first it may stimulate the body to an unnatural vigour; at the last it breaks down the strongest frame, and sends weakness into the limbs, and trembling into the flesh. At the first there may be health enough to resist the pernicious tendency of intoxication, so that with all the pleasures there are few of the pains of indulgence; at the last they become victims of manifold, inveterate, loathsome, and distressing diseases. In the beginning they count themselves of all men most happy; in the end they confess themselves of all men most miserable. In the beginning we have a company of fine young gentlemen; in the end we have a group of dilapidated and vulgar old sots. At the commencement of their career they have free access to respectable society; at its close few are willing to be seen in their company. At the first they have no small pride of character; at the last all regard for reputation is overwhelmed in the lust for drink. At the first it is a cup of exhilaration in the hands of the thoughtless youth; at the last it is a "cup of fearful trembling in the hand of an offended God." At the first it is the wine of pleasant fellowship; at the last it is the "wine of the wrath of Almighty God, poured out without mixture." At the first it is the agreeable excitement of an evening; at the last it is the long-drawn agony of an endless perdition. At the first it is the grateful stimulus of an hour; at the last it is "the worm that never dies, and the fire that never shall be quenched."

WHAT MEN OF SCIENCE SAY ABOUT TOBACCO.

"With pleasure I hasten to answer your inquiries with regard to my experience in the use of tobacco.

"In the autumn of 1817, I commenced, I know not why, the use of tobacco. It was not until the spring of 1825 that I experienced any ill effects from it, except now and then, heartburn, acid eructations, and occasional fits of melancholy. At that time I became dyspeptic. My food gave me much uneasiness; I had a sinking sensation at the pit of the stomach, wandering pains about the limbs, especially by night, disturbed sleep, loss of appetite, great difficulty of breathing from slight exercise, debility, emaciation, depression of spirits. Such have been my symptoms the last seven years; and in that time I have had two attacks of hæmoptysis (spitting of blood), which I attribute solely to the relaxing effects of this narcotic.

"The various remedies for dyspepsia were all tried in my case, without the least benefit. About the 1st of December last, I gave up the use of tobacco, and, to my astonishment, within the first twenty-four hours my appetite returned, food gave no uneasiness, and strength returned. I have been generally gaining flesh, so that

now my weight is greater than it ever was except once.

"I never was in the habit of using more than half-an-ounce of tobacco a day. This would be but a moderate allowance for most persons who use the cud. I never was a smoker; my use of it was wholly confined to chewing.

"You are at liberty to make what use of these remarks you please, and I will vouch for the truth of them.

"Your obedient servant,
"E. G. MOORE.

"Prof. Mussey."

Dr. Moore's case is peculiarly interesting, inasmuch as for some years he was regarded by many of his friends as near a fatal consumption. In the February preceding the date of his letter, I met him in a stage-coach, and was struck with his healthful appearance, and interested with the account of his restoration.

Many a man predisposed to consumption, having become a victim of the weed, the poison has made a deadly thrust at his lungs; he sickens; he wastes away; and when sinking to his grave, he clasps his pipe as his dearest idol.

Other consumptive men we see, who seem to be far gone, but they are persuaded to throw away their pipe or quid, and assert their manhood. They substitute nutritious food, nutritious drinks, and manufacturing a generous amount of good blood, they recuperate, and in vulgar phrase, disease sloughs off from the lungs, and to the surprise of all, they live, and enjoy life.

LOST IN THE JUNGLE.

BY SERJEANT LAVERACK.

THE whole of my regiment, with two exceptions, having suffered from fever and ague while stationed in Peshawur, was ordered to Rawul-Pindee for the benefit of its health. After a time another move had to be made to a spur on the great Himalayas, with a view to eradicate this dire disease.

There were a goodly number of godly men in the regiment, one of whom was a very promising young man named James Fair, the assistant schoolmaster. I felt a peculiar interest in this young man, and often took a walk with him in the cool of the evening for conversation and prayer. I had a little "cave," into which we used to retire and seek the Lord, and found the place lit up with His presence, but my dear friend, who had been long accustomed to take a glass of spirits as well as beer, forsook me and the little meetings we held daily in the schoolroom. I endeavoured by kindness and love to win him back from the paths of sin, but without effect. He sank lower and lower, and at the time when we were to commence our march to the Himalayan Mountains, he was a confirmed drunkard. Instead of filling his water-flask with water for the march, he filled it with arrack, or rum, and being on baggage guard, he was pretty much his own master. From his flask he took large draughts, and was seen staggering along the road by some of the guard, and, as it appeared, he wandered into the jungle. Not arriving in the camp for some hours after the rest of the guard, several parties on elephants were sent to seek for him. After dismounting the elephants they spread themselves in skirmishing order, and penetrated the jungle, and after searching for some time poor James Fair was discovered under a tree quite dead. It appears that what with the maddening influence of the drink, and the powerful rays of the sun, he had become delirious, and in that state he had bitten and torn the flesh off one of his shoulders and his arm, and died in this terrible state. As I think again of the fearful end of one whom I loved dearly, I tremble at the thought that some who will read the lines I am now penning, may go on and on in sin, till an end quite as awful, if not quite so vivid, overtakes

them, and I should so much like to say a word to them, hoping it may be the means in the hands of a loving God of arresting them in a career of sin ere it be too late.

A number of elephants were sent after my dear comrade, with many kind-hearted friends mounted on their backs, to rescue and save poor James Fair, and messengers still more kind and loving than comrades, have pleaded with you, and endeavoured to

"Rescue the perishing and care for the dying,
To snatch you in pity from sin and the grave."

The arguments they have used and the influences you have felt have been stronger than the influences of sin, but your stubborn heart would not yield, and, as if this were not enough, Jesus comes in the fulness of His love, right "down from the shining seats above," "to seek and to save that which was lost," to pour into your poor bruised soul the oil of His grace.

When poor Fair was found, all rushed forward to help and save, but it was too late: they could only weep—aye, and strong men, moved to tender emotions, wept there in that secluded spot over one who, if he had clung to Jesus, might have been an ornament to society and of great use in the church. "Too late," the reiteration of these words makes one wish he had a quill from a seraph's wing dipped in the fountain of the Redeemer's blood, that he might write in luminous characters, not only in Greek and Latin and Hebrew, but in every language under heaven, the story of Jesu's love, and lift up the scroll far above earth's snowy peaks and barren plains, that the glory thereof, brighter far than the sun in its meridian splendour, might be seen throughout the habitable globe, and all men everywhere led to adore the wonders of His redeeming love.

Dear brother, did you ever think that every sin as it is committed eats away a portion of your moral manhood, and renders you less and less able to resist it, and more and more unable to realise and appreciate the love of God to you, until all vitality is destroyed and you perish everlastingly. It is not "too late" now, it may be soon. Oh! yield your heart's allegiance to Him, to whom your more than all is due, to Him who gave Himself a ransom for you. Think not that you can go on and on in sin, and turn from it just as you please. No, no; sin when it has been long indulged in, becomes as the branch grafted in a part of the tree, and you can sooner snap off the old limb itself than you can separate the graft. I beseech you, therefore, to

"Stop, poor sinner, stop and think
Before you farther go,
Can you sport upon the brink
Of everlasting woe?"

Or soon will be heard the doleful note:—

"Too late, too late, will be the cry,
Jesus of Nazareth has passed by."

A DYING BROTHER.

CHARLES SIMEON was once summoned to the bedside of a dying brother. Entering the room, the relative extended his hand, and with some emotion said:

"I am dying, and you never warned me of the great danger I was in of neglecting the salvation of my soul."

"Nay, my brother," said Simeon, "but I took every reasonable opportunity of bringing the subject of religion before you, and frequently alluded to it in my letters."

"Yes," said the dying man, "but you never came to me, closed the door, and took me by the collar of the coat, and told me I was unconverted, and that if I died in that state, I should be lost; and now I am dying, but for God's grace, I might have been for ever undone."

It is said that Simeon never forgot this scene.

A Syrian convert to Christianity was urged by his employers to work on Sunday, but he declined. "But," said the master, "does not your Bible say that if a man has an ox or an ass that falls into the pit on the Sabbath day he may pull him out?" "Yes," answered Hayob, "but if the ass has a habit of falling into the same pit every Sabbath day, then the man should either fill up the pit or sell the ass."

ABOUT PREACHING.

A WRITER in one of the Church papers gives the following, which will apply to people in other latitudes as well as that in which it was first published:—

"If there's ever a morning I say, 'Give us this day our daily bread,' with special urgency, it's Sunday. And most times it isn't answered."

Miss Jane was just home from church, and spoke to her invalid sister, who had stayed at home mourning over her Bible and hymn-book and "Invitation," that she could not worship in the great congregation.

"It's, perhaps, because other days I provide for myself, but Sundays I go to church to be fed, and I come home, generally, with my appetite spoiled and my hunger unsatisfied. The reading is good, of course, but the music! It's 'artistic,' and done by a quartette whose performances often remind one of the minister who said, by a witty mistake, 'The worship of God will now be suspended while the choir sing.' Or it's Sunday-school warblings—the gospel of gush set to music. I suppose, for the real good some of them have done in revival meetings and the like, we must be tender of them, and we have Wesley's hymns for private reading. But how any one with a reasonable amount of religion and culture can deliberately prefer them, puzzles me. Perhaps the chorus of thousands put a soul into them. It needs to be put in; it's not there to begin with, though good people wrote them.

"But the sermons. It's an advantage, certainly, to have their subjects in the paper the day before; you can glance over the list at breakfast, and choose, as in a lecture or concert course. But listen to these I cut from a paper yesterday: 'Modern Shibboleths,' 'Husks,' 'Compensations,' 'A Month among the White Hills,' 'Life in Cities,' and 'Political Corruption.'

"I have a preference myself for the subject of religion. Instead, we have politics, with just enough salt of Gospel to save it, or Church history, or poor modern science. There are flowers on the altar, and music at both ends, a great deal of poetry and sentiment, but it's stale bread after all, and 'the hungry sheep look up and are not fed.'"

"There's a text you've forgotten sister," said the other quietly, "and you may preach yourself a sermon from it. 'Take heed how ye hear.'"

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

WHEN I was a lad, in my native town, I knew a painter there whose favourite works were all portraits of himself, taken in different costumes; and one of England's most famous poets produced a series of writings in which his lonely, misanthropic self was ever the central figure. So there are Christians among us who, while letting their light shine, contrive to paint themselves upon the glass of the lamp in which it is enclosed. They are for ever speaking of themselves. They tell of the many meetings which they have addressed, and of the great amount of good that they have done. Their song, like that of a cuckoo, is a constant repetition of their own name, and the listener is wearied with its iteration. Let it not be so with us. Let Christ be all and in all. It was Michael Angelo, who, according to the beautiful illustration of a Boston preacher, placed his candle so in his pasteboard cap, that his own shadow might not fall upon his work. Thus let us keep self ever in the background. Let Christ be all and in all. Let us be content to decrease if only He may increase. Let the shout of Paul animate us, so that our highest wish shall be that Christ shall be magnified in our bodies, whether it be by life or by death. Let our song be like that of the skylark, as he rises with dewy breast from his lowly earth-couch, singing as he soars, until, unseen in the deep blue above, he raises a shower of melody on the listening earth. It matters not though we be unseen, if but the light be clear; for then we are fulfilling the command, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.—Dr. Taylor.

The room for individuality in religion is immense. It is necessary that the soul love God and man—these are the banks within which the ocean of religion must lie content, but within these banks there may be many shadings of light and cloud and many tones of sea music.—David Swing.

PRAYING FOR FRIENDS.

"The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: but, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me. The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well."

THE great interest of this prayer is in the fact that Paul sees "that day" approaching to his friend and to himself—the great day of account, when good and evil must stand before the bar of God. He does not think of it in the light and almost flippant spirit which some of our modern believers affect, as if judgment had nothing to do with them. He trusts that he is safe in Christ, and that his friend is also, safe. Yet to pass the dread ordeal, and come forth uncondemned, forgiven, saved for ever, what a wonder of grace will be there! What should one pray for so earnestly as for that: "May Onesiphorus, stretching forth his hands in that day for mercy, find mercy, even as diligently seeking he found me." The Lord grant that he whom I so joyfully embraced in my poor prison may be clasped in the everlasting arms, and received into the heavenly home!

Nor is it Onesiphorus alone for whom Paul would pray. Let his household too be saved. Those sweet children, to whom he had so often spoken of the love of Jesus; those faithful servants, who had their Master's example to guide them; the kinsfolk who came to visit him; may they all be bound in the bundle of life with the Lord their God! See how great the blessing is of belonging to a godly home. A child is not saved because he has a Christian father, nor a servant because he has a Christian master; but how the influence of such a man, and his prayers, and the prayers of others on his behalf, flow out upon his family! How much love and sympathy, how much wise counsel and kindly warning, how many friends of the best stamp, are mine, because the Father of all mercies cast my lot in a home where He was honoured, and whither good men were wont to come! Take heed, ye children of the gully; ye for whom many a prayer, fervent as Paul's own prayers, has been offered for your parents' sake; to households like that of Onesiphorus much has been given, and of them much will be required.

What choicer blessing can we have than the prayers of Christian people? That bedridden saint cannot give you payment for your visits, but when you are gone she will breathe blessings on you and on yours into ears that are never closed to her. Those native Christians far across the sea are poor, and may have to throw themselves still upon the English churches for support in time of need; but the obligation is not all on one side, while such brethren pray for our prosperity. The loved ones in heaven, whom we tenderly carried down to the river's brink, cannot repay us with words of encouragement, or guide us with their long and ripe experience. But have they ceased to pray? Surely they are now our good angels, beholding the face of God, and adding their intercessions to those of the great Advocate. They may be suffered to see something of our mortal sufferings and struggles. They cannot be forbidden to think of us. And if they think of us, and still more if they see us, the incense of their adoration before the throne is mingled with urgent entreaties on our behalf, which will surely prevail. Think of us, ye departed saints, now that it is well with you, and make mention of us in the ears of your King!

Onesiphorus has been abundantly recompensed in time and in eternity for all that he had done and dared for Paul. Need we fear to be overlooked? We have the servants' prayers. We have the Master's promise, "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward."—From "The Minor Characters of the New Testament," by Rev. W. Brock.

DON'T DESPOND.—The most perilous hour of a person's life is when he is tempted to despond. The man who loses his courage loses all; there is no more hope of him than of a dead man; but it matters not how poor he may be, how much pushed by circumstances, how much deserted by friends, how much lost by the world; if he only keeps his courage, holds up his head, works on with his hands, and in his unconquerable will determines to be and to do what becomes a man, all will be well. It is nothing outside of him that kills; but what is within—that makes or unmakes.

GOLDEN TRUTHS.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR THE SUNDAYS OF 1877.

BY REV. THORNEY SMITH.

SEPT. 2. Morning. THE FINAL PLAGUE. (Exod. xi.) Since the first plague several months had elapsed. One plague more was to come, and Israel would be free. God's people were instructed what to do. They would need many things in the wilderness, and ere they departed they were to ask or request (not borrow) of their Egyptian neighbours jewels of silver and of gold (ver. 1, 2). Did they obtain them? Yes; God gave them favour in the sight of the Egyptians, and Moses was now looked upon as a very great man. Once more he stood before Pharaoh, for ver. 4-8 are the continuation of his last address to him, following chap. x. 29. Hence chap. xi, ver. 1-3, are parenthetical; and ver. 1 should read, "And Jehovah had said unto Moses." What, then, was the last threat? At midnight Jehovah would go out into the midst of Egypt, and would smite all the first-born of the Egyptians. "The going out of Jehovah from His heavenly scat denotes His direct interposition in and judicial action upon the world of men" (Keil). What midnight is meant is not certain, but three or four days would be necessary for the Israelites to get ready for their departure. The first-born represented the whole race (Gen. xlix. 3), and all the first-born of the Egyptians, from the first-born of Pharaoh to the first-born of the meanest slave, and also the first-born of the cattle, would die; because Pharaoh and his people had detained God's first-born and their cattle. Slaves and prisoners were often employed in the hard labour of the mill (Judges xvi. 21; Isa. lvii. 2). Yet *only* the first-born would be slain, for God did not intend to destroy the Egyptian nation. But Israel would not suffer the slightest injury, for against the whole of that people not a dog should point its tongue (ver. 7). The dog does this when it growls and bites. A great cry would follow; and the Egyptians would come and entreat Moses to get out of the land, and he would get out, and all his people that followed him—lit., *at his feet, i. e.*, in his train (ver. 8). Pharaoh replied, "Get thee from me," etc. (ch. x. 29), and Moses was full of righteous anger, a sign of the wrath of God which would presently fall on Pharaoh, and he went away to return no more. Ver. 9 and 10 contain the closing up of the negotiations of Moses with Pharaoh. All the wonders wrought by Moses and Aaron produced no lasting effect upon him. He hardened his heart in the first instance; and God, judicially, hardened it the more. Heb. x. 31 is the memory text. It is indeed a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. No one ever hardened his heart against God and prospered (see "History of Moses," chap. ix.).

Afternoon. PAUL AT CORINTH. (Acts xviii. 1-17.) Corinth was called "the eye of all Greece." It was a rich commercial city, situated on the Isthmus between the Aegean and Ionian Seas; and was now the political capital of Greece, and the residence of the Roman pro-consul. Aquila whom Paul found here, came from Pontus, a province of Asia Minor, and with his wife Priscilla, had but recently arrived from Italy; for Claudius Cæsar had banished all Jews from Rome. Aquila was a tent-maker; that is, he mule the cloth of goats' hair into tents, which trade Paul also knew, so that he took up his abode with this married couple, and worked with them (ch. i. Cor. iv. 12; 1 Thes. ii. 9, 2 Thes. iii. 8). Paul discoursed in the synagogue, and, when Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia (ch. xvii. 14-15, 1 Thes. iii. 6), he was pressed, or urged, by the Spirit to declare that Jesus is the Messiah. Opposition arose among the Jews (ver. 6) and Paul shook his raiment (ch. xiii. 51), and said, "Your blood be upon your own head," etc. Henceforth he would go to the Gentiles. Leaving the synagogue (ver. 7-8), he went into the house of a Gentile proselyte named Justus, and many of the Corinthians believed. Nor was the apostle's labour without fruit among the Jews, for even Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue became a convert (ver. 9-11). God had much people in the city—many who would yet be converted, and in a vision Paul was encouraged, assured of the Divine protection, and told that he need not be afraid of persecution. Hence he remained in Corinth six months (ver. 12-17). Gallio, the pro-consul of Achaia, was the brother of the celebrated L. A. Seneca. Before him the Jews dragged Paul, and charged him with a violation of the law. The apostle would have defended himself, but Gallio put a stop to the trial

for it was a question about the Jews' religion, and for these things he did not care. That is, it was not a judicial matter—not a matter of wicked audacity, but one of doctrine only with which he answered that he had nothing whatever to do. Hence he sent the accusers away. They were perhaps unwilling to go, so that they were driven away by the officers of justice. Then all the Gentiles who were present, angry with the Jews, and encouraged by the refusal of the judge, took Sosthenes, perchance the successor of Crispus as ruler of the synagogue, and beat him. This, however, was an unjust retaliation, learn 1 Rom. xii. 1. Paul is an example of diligence in secular employment, combined with true fervour in the cause of God.

September 9. Morning. THE LORD'S PASSOVER. (Exod. xii. 1-14, 29-36). To be delivered from Egypt, Israel must be consecrated. The passover was their consecration. Hitherto the Israelites had had a civil year; now they were to have a sacred one. This was to begin with the month Abib—the ear month (ch. xiii. 4, xxiii. 15), because the corn was then in the ear. It was afterwards called Nisan, and answered to our April or nearly so. (Ver. 3-4). On the tenth day of this month the Paschal lamb was to be prepared, each house or family circle having one lamb; but if they could not eat it, then their nearest neighbour were to unite with them. (Ver. 5). The lamb must be without blemish, a male of the first year, or one year old, for God must be served by the best of everything. (Ver. 19-20; i. 3, 11). It might be taken from the sheep or from the goats. (Cf. 2 Chron. xxxv. 7). (Ver. 6). It was to be preserved until the fourteenth day, and then slain at sunset, or between the two evenings (Num. ix. 3, 5, 11), probably from six o'clock to 7.20, the first evening being when the sun went down, the second when total darkness came on. In later times it was slain and offered before sunset. (Ver. 7). Some of the blood was to be put (not sprinkled, ver. 22) upon the two posts and lintel of the door of the house in which it was eaten, and Jehovah would see the blood. (Ver. 8). The flesh was to be eaten, roast with fire, not boiled, nor raw, nor underdone; and it was to be eaten whole, not a bone of it broken, but the entire lamb with the head, the legs, and the viscera being laid on the table. Of course the inwards were cleanse with water. (Lev. i. 9). In boiling the perfection of the animal would have been injured; besides which, it could not have been boiled whole, as the Israelites had no vessels large enough. Unleavened bread was to be eaten with it, for leaven was a symbol of natural corruption. With bitter herbs including lettuce and endive, common in Egypt, it was eaten, and thus the Israelites were to call to mind the bitterness of their bondage under Pharaoh's yoke. (Ver. 10). None was to be left, but all eaten if possible, and the remnants were to be burnt. (Ver. 11). It was to be eaten in haste, and everyone was to be ready for the signal which would be given that night. (Ver. 12, 13). What was that signal? God's judgment on the Egyptians, and His passing over the houses when He saw the blood. The blood was the blood of expiation and atonement, and by it the Israelites became God's consecrated people. Their sins as a nation were forgiven, and they were spared. The word *paschal* means to pass over, and the feast was ever after called the paschal feast. By the gods of the Egyptians some supposed *pinces* are meant, but probably the fancied gods are to be understood, such as the bull Apis, and the goat Mendes, for the first born of animals were smitten that night (see *Lev.*) (Ver. 14, 15). The day was to be kept in perpetual remembrance. (Ver. 29-36). The plague fell; Pharaoh and his people were alarmed; a great cry was heard in Egypt; there was not a house in which there was not one dead. Israel was now free, and they took their dough which they had intended to bake for the journey, with their kneading troughs bound up in a large piece of cloth. And they obtained all they asked for from the Egyptians, and thus spoiled them of their ornaments. The memory text is 1 Cor. v. 7, 8. Our Paschal Lamb is Christ.

Afternoon. PAUL AT EPHESUS. (Acts xviii. 24 to xix. 22). Apollos was already at Ephesus. He is described as a man of learning and eloquence, and mighty in the Scriptures. But he knew only the baptism of John—a baptism unto repentance, not the baptism of the Holy Ghost (Acts ii. 1-3). Aquila and his wife, who had become Christians under Paul's teaching at Corinth, gave him further instruction, and then he wished to go to Achaia, the province in which Corinth was situated. The Ephesian Christians gave him a letter to show at Corinth, and to that city he went. The theme of his preaching to the Jews was that Jesus was the Messiah—a

time on which he dwelt *vehemently* in a public or open place (ch. xix. 1-6). The *upper coasts* were in comparison with *the sea coast* where Ephesus was situated. This was Paul's second visit to that city (ch. xviii. 19). Here he found certain Christians, who, like Apollos, had only received John's baptism. Our version is in error here, for Paul's question was, "Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed?"—that is, as the gift of God in Christ. They replied, "We did not hear whether there were any Holy Ghost." Paul explained to them the meaning of the baptism of John. It was a baptism to repentance and to faith in the Messiah who should come; but Christian baptism is more than that; it is a baptism and faith in Jesus as the Messiah, which, when rightly received, is followed by the gift of the Spirit as the Spirit of sanctifying power. They were then baptized in or into the name—that is, the profession of faith of the Lord Jesus; but whether Paul baptized them is not said. He laid his hands upon them, however, and then they received the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with tongues as the outward manifestation of the fact. The number of them was twelve, which was somewhat significant (ver. 8-10). Paul went into the synagogue, and there spake boldly for three months; but many were hardened, whence he and the disciples left there, and then Paul discoursed daily in a hall belonging to one Tyrannus, who was probably a Greek. This hall was occupied by the apostle for two years, exclusive of the three months of ver. 8, from the year 55 to 57 A. D. Ephesus was an important city, and famous both for its commerce and its temple, whence Paul made it a centre of his operations for Proconsular Asia, and thus vast numbers both of Jews and Gentiles heard the Word of God (ver. 11-16). Special miracles were wrought, which certain vagabond exorcists attempted to imitate. Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, did so, and tried to cast out evil spirits as Paul did. They paid dearly for their folly, for they had to fly from the house with torn garments and many wounds.

September 16. *Morning*. THE FLIGHT FROM EGYPT (Exod. xiii. 17, xiv. 9). The Israelites left Egypt. God did not lead them by Gaza, the shortest route, for that would have brought them into contact with Philistines, and they were not yet prepared for war; but they were led from Goshen to the south-east, through Etham, on the edge of the wilderness, by the head of the Gulf of Suez. The word "harnessed" (ver. 15) is rendered in the margin by *five in a rank*: but the meaning of the word is, rather, *well-organised*, not confusedly, like an undisciplined rabble. They came to Succoth—a word which means *booths*, or a temporary encampment—which was probably on the south-east of Ramesses. Thence they journeyed to Etham, which some say is Arim, or "the border of the sea." Before them went the pillar of cloud and of fire, which was the symbol of God's presence, and it never left them until they came to the borders of the land of Canaan (Ps. cv. 39; Neh. ix. 9; Isa. iv. 5). This pillar was probably in the form of an inverted T, so that the lower part was a cover resting on the camp, and the upper part a lofty column which could be seen at a considerable distance (xiv. 2). The sites of Pihahioth, Migdol, and Baal-zephon have not been ascertained; but the probability is, that they were on, or near, the plain back of Suez (ver. 3-9). Pharaoh relented, and, his heart being hardened, he resolved to pursue the Israelites; he thought the mountains had shut them in, and that there would be no way of escape for them (cf. Num. xxxiii. 1-7); he made ready his own war-chariot, and took six hundred chosen chariots, the bodyguard of the king, and all the chariots of Egypt. On the monuments the Pharaohs appear as valiant warriors, heading their armies in person; and they possessed both chariots and infantry, which they could soon prepare for the field (vers. 8-9). With a vast army he pursued the fugitives, and overtook them encamping by the sea ("History of Moses," chap. xi.) Learn Ps. cvii. 14.

Afternoon. POWER OF THE WORD. (Acts xix. 13-28.) Wonderful results followed Paul's ministry at Ephesus. Many believed and were converted. They then brought their magical books, by means of which they used "curious arts," told fortunes, and pretended to ward off impending evils, and these books they committed to the flames. Ephesus was the seat of magic, and, in connection with the worship of Diana or Artemis, was practised extensively. But it was condemned by Christianity, and no true Christian can have resort to such folly. The modern spiritualism, so called, is but another species of it. The value of these books was found to be 50,000 pieces of silver (the Greek drachma), which would be about £1,770—that is, these books would have sold for that

sum; but being wicked books and leading only to wickedness, the Christians could not sell them—they must be burnt. If you are following a business that is in itself wrong, you may not transfer it to another; it must be abandoned altogether (vers. 21-28). St. Paul now intended to go to Jerusalem, by way of Macedonia and Achaia. His object was to take alms to the people in Jerusalem (ch. xxiv. 17; 1 Cor. xvi. 1-8, etc.). But here, for the first time, mention is made of Rome, which the Apostle wishes to see. Two of his assistants preceded him to Macedonia. Erastus is named again in 2 Tim. iv. 20; but whether the same person as the Erastus of Rom. xvi. 23 is doubtful. A commotion arose. Demetrius, who had probably a large manufactory of silver models of the great temple of Diana (Artemis) and employed a large number of workmen, found that his craft was in danger, and calling his people together, charged Paul with being the author of the mischief, which he no doubt was. Nay, he said that the temple itself would be despised, and the goddess he destroyed or swept away, — a strange goddess, that could not take better care of herself. The address excited the religious fanaticism of the craftsmen, and, as if that would do any good, they cried out, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." Uproars are often occasioned by attempts to put down injurious trades and occupations. In our country to-day many are afraid of the liquor traffic being injured, and hence the noise they make about it.

September 23. *Morning*. THE SEA DIVIDED. (Exodus xiv. 10-31.) As Pharaoh's army drew near, the Israelites were sore afraid. They cried to the Lord, but they had little confidence in His help, for they began to murmur, and said to Moses, "Because there were no graves at all in Egypt, hast thou fetched us to die in the desert?" Moses encouraged them, and assured them of deliverance, for he had strong faith in God. "The Lord," he said, "will fight for you, and ye shall be quiet" (v. 15-18). Moses cried to God, or laid the complaints of the people before Him. God did not reprove him, but told Him what he should do (compare v. 3 and 4). (Ver. 19 and 20) The angel of God, probably the angel of the covenant which went before the Israelites, now removed and went behind, thus defending them against the Egyptians, and the pillar of cloud took the position between the two armies, and was a dark cloud to the Egyptians, but a bright one to the Israelites, so that all that night Israel was safe (v. 21, 22). And now the sea was dried up. A strong wind swept across it, and a way was made for God's ransomed to pass over. But where did they cross? They crossed the western arm of the Red Sea, now called the Gulf of Suez, which is 190 miles in length and twenty-one in average breadth, but the precise point of the passage is matter of controversy. Some maintain that it was the end of the Gulf of Suez, and during the ebbing of the tide, but we believe that it was ten miles farther south, near the Ras-Attakah, where the sea is six and a-half miles broad, a distance not too great for the Israelites to cross during the night ("History of Moses," p. 159). Ver. 22-31. The Egyptians, full of infatuation, followed closely behind; when Jehovah cast a look upon them from the pillar of fire, the fire bursting upon them suddenly, and throwing them into utter confusion (Psalm lxxviii. 18, 19). The whole of their chariots gave way, so that they drove heavily, yet on they went until they were in the very bed of the sea; then Moses stretched out his rod, and the walls on either side, formed to protect the Israelites, gave way, and the waters rolled over the Egyptians, and the next day their bodies were washed upon the opposite shore. Thus was "the great hand" of Jehovah made manifest upon the Egyptians, and the Israelites were confirmed in their faith both in Jehovah and in Moses. Learn Ps. ix. 16.

Afternoon. PAUL AT MILETUS. (Acts xx. 17-38.) Miletus was situated on the coast of the Egean Sea. St. Paul touched here on his journey to Jerusalem. Here he sent for the elders of the church at Ephesus, which by land was about twenty to thirty miles distant. They came, and he addressed them as here described (v. 18-35). It was a very touching address, and reminded them of his ministry among them, which had been eminently faithful. Repentance toward God, or a change of disposition, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ had been the chief lessons of his ministry. But now (ver. 22-25) he was bound in spirit, or led by an inward impulse and necessity, to go up to Jerusalem, where he knew not what would befall him, except that the Holy Spirit witnessed in every city by the mouth of Christian prophets (ch. xiii. 2; xxi. 4-10) that he would there meet with bonds and afflictions. But he was not afraid, for he

esteemed his life of no account if he might finish his course with joy (2 Tim. iv. 6-8). But he would see these elders no more. This was his farewell address, and he therefore gave them a few parting counsels (ver. 28-31). They were the elders or pastors of the Church, hence they were (1) to take heed to themselves and to the flock; (2) to feed it with the wholesome food of the Word, for it was the Lord's property, having been purchased with His blood (not the blood of God). This would be necessary, because grievous wolves, or false teachers, would arise from without who would not spare the flock; and seducers would present themselves from the Church within. Therefore watch, says the apostle. He had been with them three years (ver. 29) a general expression, for according to ch. xix. 10 the actual period was two years and three months, though probably it was somewhat more. He now commended them to God (ver. 32); declared that he had coveted no man's silver or gold; that he had worked with his own hands for his support; and that he had reminded them of the Word of the Lord Jesus, how He said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." This saying is not given in the Gospels, so that he had learnt it from oral tradition. At the close of his address he knelt down; they did the same, and he prayed with them all. They fell on his neck and kissed him (full of sorrow, because it was their last interview), and then they accompanied him to the ship, and tore themselves away from the devoted apostle. Memory text, 2 Cor. iv. 4,—a very suitable and significant one.

September 30. *Morning.* Moses's Song. (Exod. xv. 1-21). Pharaoh and his army were destroyed. Now therefore, Moses and the Israelites stood safe on the eastern shore of the Red Sea, and there chanted this lofty song. It was a hymn of victory composed under the influence of the Spirit of God—a spontaneous effusion, which the people learnt perhaps by repeating it after Moses. It consists of two parts: (1) retrospective, from verses 1 to 13; (2) prospective, verses 14 to 18. Then follows the chorus by Miriam and the women (vers. 20, 21). Moses appears here as a prophet, and foretells the doom that awaits the inhabitants of Canaan; while he sees his own people placed in the land of promise, the temple reared, and God dwelling in the sanctuary on the Hill of Zion ("History of Moses," chap. xi.) Memory text, Ps. lxxvi. 16.) It implies that, like Moses, we are to declare the wonderful deliverances which God works out for us. See also Rev. xv. 3.

Afternoon. REVIEW OF THE QUARTER'S LESSONS. Our limits again prevent us from doing this here; but teachers will be able to do it with such helps as they can obtain, and it will be well for them carefully to reconsider all these passages both of the Old and New Testaments.

ASK AID FROM THE HOLY GHOST.

WE think sometimes that we come very near to each other. But after all we never touch. Between my mind and yours, between yours and the most intimate friend you have in the world, there is a barrier, high as heaven, deep as hell, impenetrable as adamant. Thus far can we come and no farther. We can never enter into the soul of any human being. No human being can ever enter into ours. Yet, my dear pupil, did it ever occur to you that there is one Mind, and that a mind of infinitely great and transcendent power, to which there is no such barrier, and that this transcendent, all-knowing, all-powerful Mind is continually in direct contact with the very essence of your mind? Can I influence your thinking faculties, and cannot the infinite God, who made these faculties? Can He who gave our bodies all their power of growth and strength, not give growth and strength to our minds? I do not profess to understand how the Divine mind acts upon the human mind. I cannot always understand even how one human mind acts upon another. But of the fact I make no more question than I do of the powers of flame, of steam, or of gravitation. And, as one set here to guide you in your mental progress, in all mental earnestness, I exhort you devoutly to invoke the aid of the Holy Ghost in the promotion of your studies—not merely to help you to use your acquisitions rightly, for His honour and the good of your kind, but to help you in making those acquisitions.—*Prof. John E. Hart, LL.D.*

Like a swift ship my life speeds on its way till it reaches its haven. Where is the haven to be? Shall it be found in the land of bitterness and dreariness, that region of the lost? Or shall it be the sweet haven of eternal peace, will ere not a troubling wave can ruffle the quiescent glory of my spirit?—*Spurgeon.*

As the earth must have its sun, so the soul must have its Christ. The longing of every heart is for power to look beyond the mists and darkness of life, to penetrate through the seen to the unseen, and learn something of Deity and of His purpose concerning us. That is a longing which men will ever have, let the coming ages bring with them what they may, and one which has never been so fully satisfied as in the person of Mary's gentle Son. There may be those who, in the future as now, will continue to claim that philosophy and science, and the natural religion which grows out of them, suffice to answer man's questions as to God and human destiny; but this class, as to-day, will always be small. The world calls for bread, and will not be satisfied with husks. It can only feed its hunger on the manna of Revelation; and until God shall vouchsafe unto it a higher manifestation of His wisdom, love and power, it cannot give up its Christ.—*Christian Leader.*

THE TWO TABERNACLES.

A SERMON BY THE LATE REV. WILLIAM ARNOT.

"We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." 2 Corinthians v. 1.

IT is through the Gospel that life and immortality have been brought to light. Beyond the range of revelation these subjects lie in the deepest darkness. A feeble fluttering guess was all that unaided men could ever reach regarding a life beyond the grave. Some dim, indefinite consciousness of a higher destiny may tremble in the immortal spirit, but in the absence of a light from heaven, there is no distinct vision, no sustaining hope. A jar may be charged with electric fire, and capable, in certain circumstances, of giving forth light and heat; yet if it remain isolated, all is dull, and dark and silent. You cannot distinguish that charged, susceptible vessel from another of similar shape and size that is not so charged. When a certain sharp point is brought near the susceptible vessel, sparks of living light are emitted; whereas, though the same sharp point is brought near the other vessel, all will remain dark and dead as before. Thus there is in a human spirit a susceptibility and a capacity which lies dormant, indeed, as long as man is left to himself, but which leaps into life as soon as the Word of God is pointed to the heart. The love of Christ kindles in a human breast the blessed hope of immortality; but it is only in a human breast that even the love of Christ could generate such a flame. We are low; but even in our depths we possess a constitution that is capable of being elevated; and the Gospel of grace contains and exerts the power which prevails to quicken the dead, and reconcile the alienated. The fallen have no hope in themselves; but even to the fallen the Gospel brings glad tidings of great joy.

In the preaching of Christ and his apostles the world is represented as a wilderness, and human-kind as pilgrims passing through it. No other book than the Bible treats men thus. It has courage and faithfulness to tell us the truth. If you surrender yourself to its guidance, you must walk as a stranger and pilgrim on the earth; you must repeat over again Israel's wandering from the Egypt of this world to the rest that lies beyond the swellings of Jordan.

This is one reason why worldly minds dislike the Bible. It is like death and the grave to them, because it brings them alongside of eternity, and keeps them there. The Unseen converses with them through the pages of that book, and compels them to feel that the veil which separates them from

the judgment seat is as thin as the leaves on which the letter lies. This is not a pleasant position for one who is unforgiven, unreconciled. The fool says in his heart, "No God." Those who are not at peace with God are not at home in the Bible.

Let us examine the text word by word, that we may ascertain its meaning, and submit our hearts to its power.

"Tabernacle" is a frail, temporary dwelling, generally of cloth, which men make for shelter by night, when they expect to be so short a time in the place that it is not worth while to erect a more substantial edifice. The Hebrews in the wilderness dwelt in tents, shifting their encampment from day to day. Travellers and soldiers use them still. A few posts, a few cords, and a few pieces of cloth constitute the dwelling. It is easily set up, and easily taken down again.

The body is frequently compared to a tent. It is very beautiful, but very frail. Here we come abreast of an unfathomable mystery. Seeing it is made so perfect, why is it made so feeble? All the skill of all the world could not make even a tolerable imitator of its mechanism; and yet the prick of a pin will turn it into dust. It is as glorious as the starry sky, and yet as fading as a summer flower. Perhaps the power and providence of God are more vividly displayed in the human body as it has been constituted, than they would have been by structures less liable to injury and decay. An infant in a dark and dangerous path dare not stir from his father's side; whereas a robust youth may select his own route, and return at his own time. Our Father in heaven knows that it is difficult to keep His children close to Himself as matters stand. I suppose it would have been still more difficult if the child had been intrusted with greater power. The age of the antediluvians seems to have encouraged them in their rebellion. Humanity in its first stage, enjoying

ing a larger liberty, showed itself a wild beast; in the second stage it was held more shortly by the head. In Him we live, and move, and have our being. The tendency to rebellion must be persistent and strong when a creature so feeble attempts to cast the Creator's cords away.

On the other hand, when the spirit of a dear child has through Christ been attained, the frailty of the trustor makes the trust more sweet. His strength is made perfect in our weakness.

Perhaps we may also throw out the suggestion, that though the mere frailty of one habitation would not prove to its inmate that a more solid mansion was prepared for his use, yet if we know that the abiding home is ready, the shaking of the temporary tabernacle under which we are getting shelter to-day will contribute to remind us of another rest, and quicken our desire for an abundant entrance on its blessedness.



THE LATE REV. WILLIAM ARNOT.

From a Photograph by Messrs. Elliott and Fry, London.

"This tabernacle"—The house in which we now dwell is not our only dwelling-place. In the context a comparison is expressly instituted between two successive residences. The design of the Spirit in this word is to preserve us from bestowing all our regard on this tabernacle while another is more worthy. "We that are in this tabernacle do groan": the conception which answers to this intimation as an echo to a sound is, there are some not in this tabernacle, but in another, and groaning is not their occupation to-day. We occupy this tabernacle to-day; but to-morrow we may own a more princely mansion. Nor does the Scripture spread out before us an indefinite series of changes. To them that are in Christ Jesus, after one change all will be fixed for ever. Those who go in by the gate into the City of God shall go no more out. When the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. "Blessed are the home-sick, for they shall get home." Sweet home!

"Burdened."—There may be some who, for a time, could scarcely recognise this as a description of their own condition. The young, healthy, and prosperous, are comparatively free from the pressure of a heavy load. Their hearts for a time are as light as their limbs. They trip along life as if they were chasing butterflies in a flowery meadow. To a certain extent, and for a certain period, this is not the creature's sin, but the Creator's kind appointment. The cares of age laid on the heart of a child would crush his spirit, and render him incapable of fulfilling his task when he should come of age. In mercy to men, a certain brightness is permitted to hover on the horizon during the early morning of life's day; for if the blossom did not open, the fruit would never swell: but even in childhood so many weights begin to press, and when youth has passed, they constitute a great and perpetual burden, which will not drop off till the burden and its bearer drop together into the grave. The cares of house and children, of business and company, of friendships and enmities, increase and multiply until the beams of the tabernacle are creaking prematurely under the accumulated weight.

These burdens are useful. They may be inventoried among the "all things" that work together for good. They are the weary who can truly long for rest, or truly enjoy it when it comes. The sorrows of earth will enhance the joys of heaven. Not that human sufferings in any measure or degree can purchase a right to reward in the great day; but if an abundant entrance is secured through faith in Christ, the rugged rocks and scorching sand of the desert will make the glassy, golden streets of the New Jerusalem feel more smooth beneath the pilgrim's feet.

In one sense the heaviest part of the burden which we bear in this tabernacle is our own sin. Here, however, the apostle, I think, is not speaking of guilt still defiling the conscience. Sin, as to its curse and doom, has for these pilgrims been wholly taken away. Indeed, while sin is not forgiven, the sinful, as a general rule, are not much burdened by its weight. It is when sin is forgiven that the sinner most bitterly complains of his sin. Strange, yet divinely true, it is when Christ has taken, or is taking sin away, that the Christian feels it lying heavy on his heart. The conscience, now tender, is greatly disturbed by its defiling presence, although its condemnation has been entirely removed. "The body of this death," even though its spirit is cast out, constitutes for Christ's redeemed the weightiest portion of the burden under which they groan.

"We groan."—A groan is nature's outlet for grief. In some kinds of disease, to forbid a groan would sensibly add to the patient's suffering. It indicates also a desire for relief. Its double meaning is, "I suffer, and would fain be free."

This desire does not by itself constitute a mark of grace. It belongs to nature, and is often experienced in great strength where there is no spiritual light or life. The discontented make many changes in order to escape from suffering; but the suffering follows them into every sphere. A master may dismiss his servant against whom his anger was stirred, but he has not thereby been delivered from the disturber of his peace. His own irritable temper remains, a tenant on a long lease, defying all his impotent processes of ejection. Mere groans are not sure marks of grace. Some are weary of this world who are by no means ready for the next.

"Not that we would be unclothed."—Mark this. To be unclothed means to put off this tabernacle. It means to die, and return to corruption in the grave. Even Paul, after he had attained triumphant faith and blessed hope, shrinks from the dissolution of the body. Even this man, who knew right

well that a crown of righteousness was ready for his head, starts at the cold image of Death, and distinctly intimates that the prospect is unpleasant: "But we have no wish for the unclothing." I like this; this is good for me. I learn here that positive love of closing with the King of Terrors is not a necessary mark of Christ's redeemed people. Some of them at some period may have been brought into such a state of mind, but this is not a characteristic which every believer must always possess.

I love this warm life. I shrink from death. And therein I think I do not sin. God is not displeased with me for loving that which he has bestowed. If by faith in His Son, and through the ministry of His Spirit, He make me willing to give it up when He recalls it, enough: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." But this warm clothing which He has wrapped round my life—He does not expect that I should at this moment wish it away.

Christians love life for many reasons. They love it, first of all, not as Christians, but as sentient beings. They love it in common with those who know not Christ, but who see the sunlight, and feel the balmy air, and tread the flowery ground. They love it in common not only with their fellow-men, but in common with the brutes that perish. They love life in common with the cattle that browse on the meadows, and the birds that warble in the trees, and the insects that flutter in the sunbeam. But Christians love life with a deeper, more intelligent love than other creatures, because the gifts which are in their own nature sweet, are sweeter when they are received from a Father's hand.

It is a mistake to suppose that the worldly enjoy their portion here, and that the disciples of Christ permit their religion to embitter all the sweets of earth, postponing the prospect of enjoyment until they pass through the gates of the grave into a future and distant heaven. This is a mischievous error. Those who hope in Christ for the world to come, enjoy the world that now is better because of that hope. The society of friends, the shelter of home, the sleep of night, the dawn of morning, the daily bread, the draught of cool water in the noonday toil—all these good things are sweeter to the man who has a better portion behind them than they are to the man who has nothing else.

The disciples of Jesus enjoy this life, moreover, as a field of useful labour. Work may be done here which cannot be done beyond the boundary of the present life. They who are bought with a price delight to serve the Lord who bought them; and this is the place where the work of the kingdom must be done.

"But clothed upon."—This disciple fully comprehends and clearly expresses what he likes and what he does not like in connection with living and dying. He is well aware, indeed, that the "unclothing" comes between him and the blessed immortality. He is willing to meet the necessity of putting off "this mortal coil," for the sake of the glory that shall follow; but he frankly confesses that the act of putting off is not agreeable. He does not refuse that process of stripping, but he tells us plainly that he does not like it. He not only submits to it—he bounds forward to meet it joyfully; but the cause of this buoyancy is a love, not of the fire and water of the passage, but of the large place to which the passage leads.

"That mortality might be swallowed up of life."—The dead seem to be swallowed up when they are laid in the grave, or dropped over the ship's side into the sea. Earth and sea must yet give up their dead; but in the first instance, and for a time, they swallow, they devour their victims.

Now, as the dead are swallowed up by the sea when they sink in it, Death itself will one day be swallowed up. Who or what will devour the devourer? LIFE.

Christ has said in express terms, "I am the resurrection, and the life." They who fall asleep in Jesus drop, in the very act of dying, into the life eternal. Mortality—the liability to death—even the capability of dying—will, to the redeemed, be lost, as the bodies of the dead who died at sea are lost in the abyss. Death is swallowed up—is lost in life. The dying day of a Christian is his birthday; the departure is the entrance. The passage may be dark and narrow, but it leads into life. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord."—From "The Anchor of the Soul, and other Sermons." T. Nelson and Sons.

The table of life is abundantly supplied. If we don't eat so fast, it will taste the better; if we don't eat too much, we shall be better nourished; if we don't snatch, there will be enough for all.—C. G. Ames.

"LONG AGO."

AN OLD WOMAN'S STORY.

BY MARY PARKIN.

It was just such a summer as this. The same intense heat reigned, while the whole earth grew languid under its sway. Why do I say "such a summer as this," when both the summer and the dream are already things of the past?

We—my father, mother, and I—lived in a seaport town as flourishing as it was beautiful. Strangers, who were envious of its prosperity, in which they had no share, used to call it "rotten at the core," as if they were speaking of a beautiful peach or apple that presented a fair outside only to cover the inward lack of sweetness.

Yet this town of ours, my beautiful Southampton, whose every walk is, to me, pregnant with happy thoughts and memories, was fair in reality as in seeming. Knowing that I shall never go back to it, I can yet look longingly upon its remembrances as children do upon the toys for whose use they have grown too old.

Sometimes I wonder if when I die "Southampton" will be found written upon my heart, as the native place of an ancient king was, according to mythology, found engraved upon his very soul.

Well do I remember its High-street, its parks, its avenue, its Common, and above all its waters. Shall I ever forget the girlish joy with which I used to pull my little boat over its blueness to Marchwood or Hythe, with an exultant gladness such as can never dawn into my life again. Will the recollections of my first essays in equestrianism fade away? the leafy woods of Chilworth, the steep hill of Woodmill leading into Batterne, the old arch of Upper Bassett, or the quiet sunny slopes of St. Cross ever be forgotten? Never! A reverie of untold sweetness falls over me like a mantle when I think of my girlhood's happy days. Of the school in which I passed my dreamy youth, the old playground, first at Totton, then at Shirley, yet all ruled by the same hand. I see the croquet lawn, the allotted gardens we individually cultivated, the targets of red and blue towards which we winged our arrows, and I am a girl again—a child conning her daily task—a bird set free from her duties—then I ask myself, did I really live in this "long ago?" Did I once touch the harp of youth as other children? Was there ever a melody of sweet sounds in my life as in that of others? I bow my head as the answer comes, while the tears trickle through my poor thin fingers like rain. I hold them up to the light, and as I do so I thank God that with the years that go by they grow more transparent, more feeble. Sometimes I ask myself will God in His "for ever," let in any of the dark shadows of the past? Yet my wondering question stays itself upon the promise, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away." So I grow calm as the comfort comes into my heart, because all the former things are "passed away."

"Long ago." Is it a dream, or was I once really a child? Did I dance the happy hours away as I watch other children do now? God of my sorrows! hast Thou swept away all such hallowed recollections? Shall I never look upon those golden moments again?

Aye, I have it. The dream is with me now. I stand again upon the threshold of my girlish life.

My John, do you remember our courting days? In the spirit land do you ever see a face that dimly foreshadows what mine shall be when I rejoin you, or do you look down through the pure portals of azure to see a wizened bride such as I now am? For as life itself passes over me the traces of its travail are left upon my face and brow, the finger-marks of the sore trials through which all do pass.

When I was little more than a child my mother died, so, as soon as my school days were over, I began the duties of housekeeper to my father, and even now, after all these years, people smile at the almost worshipful adoration with which I mention his name, but he was worthy of it! Yet I have stood at his open grave, and said "Good bye" to him, as we bid farewell to the purest and dearest of all the earthly gifts with which God crowns us. When he was put away beneath the sod, when the birds chanted the burial dirge over his new tomb, I said, "No greater sorrow than this can darken my life; henceforth I am invulnerable to all earth's

woes. One anguish has, like Pharaoh's lean kine, swallowed up the rest."

After the settlement of affairs, just enough money remained to keep me from actual want. Moreover, I was engaged to be married.

In this last sentence the gist of my story is hidden. In one of the prettiest suburbs of our town a beautiful little chapel nestled amidst the dark foliage of the ever-swaying pine trees, and underneath its roof I was to have been united in the bonds of holy matrimony to one Douglas Macdonald.

Without the slightest tremor I now write his name, without one throeb of compunction over the revelation of this secret of my first love. My dream was of short duration, and in the "long ago" of which I write, this vision is scarcely worthy of a place.

My father was reputedly a wealthy man, while I was his only and petted daughter, the heiress of his accumulated riches and the recipient of all his love. I picture even now the affectionate love with which he used to look at me; hear again his tender tones; feel his soft kisses upon my cheek and brow; then a dense unfathomable mystery of darkness sweeps over the picture, and I am orphaned.

Even in the direst extremity of my sorrow the remembrance of Douglas's love came like Gilead's balm to heal my soul, as I pondered the dying words of my father, "Thank God, you possess another love than mine."

Three little words will tell the whole subsequent history of that first wild mad love of mine—He was false! Over the "long ago" the mist of years is falling, or I could not so calmly write of the anguish of spirit supervening. A very little change is necessary to open a woman's eyes to the fact that her lover is growing faithless to her, yet knowing the difference he evinced in his behaviour I yet clung with despairing tenacity to the vague thought that I could yet be all in all to Douglas, once again, even as I fondly imagined I had been in former days! Accustomed from earliest childhood to every luxury which wealth could buy, it was no light penance for me to bear the wants and deprivations of comparative poverty; yet even this sunk into insignificance as I became fully aware that with the loss of riches my deprivations did not end. I could have staked my life on his honour, yet if I had done so mine would have been the loss! The universal admiration which I had been wont to command as the hostess of my father's house soon fell away, and the stabbing pang of my quondam friends' desertion touched the one vulnerable spot in my heart. Some one has said that "we are but children of a larger growth, crying for the moon because she is out of reach." Thus I stretched out imploring hands for the good now so unattainable, bitterly condemning the fickleness of fortune in robbing me upon every side. My life of serene, joyous happiness was over, so I gathered my forces together to meet the coming storm! A few weeks and its fiercest beatings were past. My home sold, and I fairly lunched upon the open sea of life, a butt for its pitiless beatings and its wildest lashings.

When, for the last time, I stood in the old porch at home, looking round upon the fertile fields with their shady trees and tall grass, their pleasant nooks and countless beauties, my heart failed me, until in this supreme moment of desolation I felt almost as if "the pains of death had gat hold upon me," it was such a total surrendering of the old life for the new. In the deep well of memory the knowledge of that secret anguish lies. Sometimes I lift the stone to look down into its depths, unseen by any save God's eye alone, until the veil is drawn aside in His own cloudless light.

The long note of sorrow has died into silence, while the softened glow of the after-splendour touches it into a thing too tender to cause even the shedding of a solitary tear.

The gold and red were in the western clouds, tinting the rich evening sky with a radiant transitory beauty, when I bade a long farewell to the phantasies and dreams of my youth, to the home whose very walls were fair as Eden's fairy palaces to the heart that loved them. My love—whom I had thought so true and brave—my father, my home—all vanished.

You will blame me for the deeds that followed; yet let your censure be just. As a woman would plead with her child, so I plead with you to judge me by the deep loneliness of humanity as well as with your lofty sense of rectitude.

Twelve months after my father's death I again became engaged, this time to a man true as steel, grand as your concep-

tion of manhood can possibly fancy him; yet—and here was the sin of my engagement—I did not love him.

Loneliness and pique were the two great moving powers that influenced me; so I married him, unloving and cold, stoical and reserved, yet craving with a passionate yearning for something with which to fill my empty heart. Volumes of words would fail to give expression to the wondrous tenderness with which he ever encompassed me, but my heart slumbered in a trance of forgetful misery, while even the light of his love shining upon it seemed to possess no awakening power.

We had been married two months, during which no breath of care had been allowed to blow upon me; no pleasure had been denied, when my husband, John Lithgow, took me down to the sea-side, for my pale face, with the heavy circles round the eyes, told its own tale of health undermined. In truth, I thought I was going there to die, and I used to wickedly wonder if Douglas would feel a pang of compunction or pity when he heard of my death. So I used to lie on the sea-shore, listlessly and wearily, for when the pique had died out my heart was very cold and still, almost too languid to beat. I was filling life with "the grave, dark deeds that cannot be undone," hating it for a passage as I threw away the noble love God had bestowed upon me for the crowning of my life, while I wasted the riches of my own heart upon an affection whose object was a figment of my brain, not the reality I fancied him.

My husband loved me right royally and purely, with a sweet tenderness, as manly as it was great, yet I made no effort to return it.

I must have been mad in those days, or else childishly ignorant of the gift I was spurning. I know not which. When God took it from me I woke with an exceeding bitter cry to the vain knowledge that it was gone for ever.

For ever! did I say? Nay, surely God is more pitiful. Will He not let me have it again when I am more worthy of it? It was a soft autumnal day when He took it back to Himself. Some time I think that when the winter is over, and the new spring breaketh, He will restore it to me.

Oh, that day! It had been hot and oppressive throughout every hour of it; so unbearably sultry that even the cool wafting of the sea-breezes had failed effectually to lessen the temperature. All nature grew drowsy, as if a heavy sleep was falling upon it, while the low distant mutterings of the coming storm were the only sounds that broke the brooding silence.

During the whole day I had not moved outside the house, but when the evening came, I said to John, "We will go down to the beach for a little while."

"There is a storm coming, my love; you will be best indoors," he made answer. But a spirit of contrariness moved me, and I persisted in going; so a few moments later we were down in the very midst of a group of anxious fishermen, who were straining their eyes to catch a sight of the little boats which had not yet come in, while the women were flocking down with white, anxious faces. Poor wives, whose bread-winners seemed always in danger! As we stood there, the wind began to rise, and the mutterings of the thunder grew louder and louder, booming over the expanse of sea with a noise too fearful to describe.

"God help the poor wives!" my husband breathed, as the storm swept on, lashing the waves into huge billows of foam, while the glare of the lightning lit up all the strained, anxious faces into unearthly weirdness and beauty.

A moment or two of intense suspense; then a boat was sighted, a tiny fishing smack, with its precious freight of living souls, four in number. The little bark struggled gallantly, while we stood awe-stricken, watching the weather-beaten faces of the sailors who were waiting to throw the ropes to its crew.

Another fearful glare! The waves seemed on fire. Then we saw the men struggling in the white foaming billows. A piercing shriek rang out from the lips of the women, while one fell down upon her face, and cried frantically to God for aid. I shall never forget that scene! The white set faces of some, who turned their anguished, appealing looks towards the sky; the screams of others, who were too young to control the bitterness of sorrow which came upon them when they remembered their own husbands and fathers, who had not yet returned; the women who grovelled upon the earth in the midst of the dank seaweed, crying to the all-pitiful Father as she never had cried before! I see it all! Would to God I could forget it!

I shut my eyes upon the scene, as one to whom the revelation of life comes too sharply. I think my senses were leaving me, for I remember nought excepting the fashion in which John was straining me to him, and the words ringing in my ears, "God bless you, my love, my dearest, if I do not come back again."

The very expression dazed me, and I remember no more until the storm had ceased, and the moon was playing over the waters like a mother dazing with a placid, sleeping child! I was in bed, and a woman sat by my side as if watching me!

Like a fearful dream the whole scene came back. I sat up in bed still half-conscious, with a vague wonder moving me as to where John could be. I dare not write more of that coming back to life! Often I wonder if it was not an awful dream from which I shall awaken to see John at my side again. Too late! when I would have given my life for a word from his dead lips.

He had gone into the plunging, treacherous sea to save the husbands of others, and left his own wife desolate for ever more!

The bright, sunny head was chill and damp with the waters of death, and the lips I had never sought half enough in life, were dead for ever to my wildest caresses.

Almost half a century has fled since then. I sit in the firelight's glow, with my hands folded across my lap, and when I am alone I see the face of my lost love—loved too late—until I wonder if this "long ago" of mine was not only the event of yesterday. When I sit and ponder over it I am glad with a great gladness that though there is a "river of life" in the great city, yet there is "no more sea." Often John lays his hand in mine, and I know that he is leading me! No, I am not childish! He is sitting beside me now as I write, and when God says to him, "Bring her home," I am so weary that I think even the angels will chant "Amen!"

Yes, I am glad—"There shall be no more sea!"

I have known no earthly love since the waves took my husband, but his God is mine, and soon I shall see them both "face to face."

The shadows of life lengthen, but the day is breaking over the mountains—a new day in which I shall "go home."

AFFLICTIONS.

LUTHER was wont to say three things made a good minister; temptation, affliction, supplication. The same also conduce to the making of a good Christian. And, indeed, 'tis seldom that a soul comes to any eminence in grace, until he has been exercised with sanctified afflictions and temptations. And doubtless there is many a soul who may and must say, that next to Christ, his afflictions have, through His grace and blessing, been His mercies. Oh how should this draw souls to Christ, and allure them into a marriage covenant with Him! Poor soul! it may be that which keeps thee from Christ is the fear of what afflictions thou mayst meet with in His ways. But know (1) thou mayest meet affliction, yea, first or last, thou wilt assuredly meet with affliction, though thou never closest with Christ. Alas! wicked men and unbelievers meet with troubles and afflictions, and that even in this world oftentimes. However, to be sure at last, they will have a full cup, yea, the very dregs of God's wrath poured out unto them. (2) Whatever inflictions thou mayest meet withal in the way of Christ, closing with Him, He sweetens all for thee; and that so as thou wouldst not have been without them for a world! Oh, scare not at the Cross, but close in with Christ!

DRESS IN CHURCH.—Nowhere, we are ashamed to say, is the bad taste of ostentation in dress more conspicuous than here. It seems as if, with many, the Sabbath were the grand occasion for display, and the church the place for self-exhibition. In no other country have we seen so much show and tinsel in the churches as in some of our own cities. In Europe—not only in England, but on the Continent—such display is rigidly forbidden, not by law, but by the recognised canons of good taste. Nothing is considered more vulgar—a more certain mark of low breeding—than this kind of ostentation in a place of worship. It is only the "new rich"—what we should call the "shoddy"—that try to exhibit themselves in the house of God. But as that class is larger in this country than anywhere else, we have more of these wretched exhibitions.—*The Evangelist.*

LEAD US IN THE NARROW WAY.

Words from "Church Hymns."

Holsworthy Six lines. 78 D. JOHN D. CORNER

1. Lord, Thy chil- dren guide and keep, As with fee- ble steps they pass
On the path- way rough and steep, Through this wea- ry will we pass
Ho- ly Je- su, ev'ry day, Lead us in the nar- row way A- men.

2 There are stony ways to tread—
Give the strength we sorely lack;
There are tangled paths to tread—
Light us lest we miss the track.
Holy Jesu, etc., etc.

3 There are sandy wastes that lie,
Cold and sunless, vast and drear:
Where the feeble faint and die—
Grant us grace to persevere.
Holy Jesu, etc., etc.

4 There are soft and flowery glades,
Decked with golden-fruited trees,
Sunny slopes, and scented shades:
Keep us, Lord, from slothful ease.
Holy Jesu, etc., etc.

5 Upward still to purer heights,
Onward yet to scenes more blessed,
Calmer regions, clearer lights,
Till we reach the promised rest.
Holy Jesu, etc., etc.

IDEAL RECREATIONS.

BY REV. J. H. McCARTY, M.A.

WE do not know who it was that coined the expression, "Building castles in the air"; but we think it an expression quite apt. We can have ideal castles, ideal fortunes, and positively enjoy ideal recreations. It is just about as well for us to imagine ourselves rich, as to be rich. If a man walk across the river on ice which is three inches thick—thick enough, in all conscience, to carry one—while he imagines it to be a foot through, he is just as well off as if it were a foot in thickness. It is a foot thick in his idea. So the riches of this world. They who have just enough of this world's goods to make them comfortable, have all any body can use. Riches are a delusion, as well as a snare. Some people are poor who have millions, while others are rich who have very little in the world to call their own. True riches are in the heart, while a false philosophy puts them in the pocket.

How rich a contented person may be! The atmosphere, the sunlight, the balmy breezes, the fragrance of all the flowers, the landscapes, are all free to all men—poor as well as rich. Every man can own pictures which no artist, not a Rubens or a Vandyke could paint, and roam at will over all creation, enjoying it, owning it—in imagination. And so long as one can have all these things to enjoy, without paying taxes, or being in danger of displacement, who cannot be rich, ideally, in fact? A contented man is rich.

We have, then, our castles; our spirits live in them. We have our gardens, where bloom the rarest flowers; and we can walk through them. We can mount up the shining way of the better life, and hold companionship with the angels.

We can travel over all lands. We can go into the chamber of kings. We can gaze upon the splendour of courts; climb mountain-peaks, where foot of flesh never stood; and walk along the ocean's bottom, and count the decayed wrecks that strew it.

All these recreations we can take in an ideal way. When we hear the songs of thrush or robin, we feel that God sets them to singing for us. When the shower descends to moisten the earth, it is to set the flowers to blooming for our benefit—to start up the wheat for our bread.

We are not an "idealist," in the technical sense, and yet we see in idealism the source of much good. We all have our ideals—we must have them.

The architect constructs the house, on paper, which is an ideal house. Take yonder lofty and beautiful building. The plan was not made from the building, but the building from the plan. Or, look at that delicate and beautiful piece of machinery. It was not built by simply adding one piece to another—here a lever, there an arm, yonder a wheel or piston—but first a plan was made, a nice adjustment of parts was arranged; and thus the machinist saw all complete, and in running order, before the forge had wrought out a single wheel or arm. The whole had existed subjectively, as the philosophers would say, in his mind. Oh that is a strange power with which mortals are endowed! Battles can be planned, governments founded, navies set afloat, railroads constructed from ocean to ocean, in the mind; and the subjective thought can become an objective reality.

And here we have evidence of that soul-life which we are yet to live, "when this mortality shall have put on immortality"; when the creations of the mind will be equal to the ability to explore all space, and roam at will throughout the dominions of the Eternal.

And so in our life, we need an ideal of goodness, truth, faith: a plan to work by. Where do we find our best pattern? In history? It furnishes us some noble names of martyrs, heroes, statesmen, artists, philanthropists. But we go not to the history of Greece, or Rome, or England, to find the model on which to build our character, but to Him who was "despised and rejected of men"; to Him whose life was a grand and beautiful illustration of goodness in its Divine simplicity—who could look upon even His murderers, and say, "Father, forgive." No other such man as He ever lived. Confucius, and Zoroaster, and Plato were, in their day and generation, brilliant lights, and have projected themselves into distant ages; but, compared with the Nazarene, the Man of the seamless garment, the King of kings and Lord of lords, their light pales into dimness. O, there is power in that name! Read the story of His life, and you will learn a lesson of meekness, patience, and love, which can be learned nowhere else. If we construct our lives by this model, they will be beautiful indeed.

Give your little child an outline picture of a house or tree;

give it a blackboard and crayon, and set it to the task of copying the image. It will draw many crooked lines, and make many mistakes; but it will study the pattern, and will, in time, be able to master the subject, and produce a true copy. This is what the ideal will do for the child. And so let us set Jesus in the horizon of life—Jesus full of love, free from passion, meek, gentle, holy—and we shall soon find ourselves desiring to be like him; and longing to be so will have its influence on our lives. He of the matchless speech once said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." If we look and long for the better life—the spiritual life—He will lift us up to it. Baron Von Humboldt speaks of standing on one of the lofty summits of Chimborazo, with the sun shining in brightness over them, the clouds wrapping their dark mantles about the mountain-sides, while far below him, lightnings flashed and thunders roared; yet all was serene where he stood firm on the rocks of Chimborazo. So we shall be lifted above clouds and storms; our feet may stand on the eternal Rock of Ages.

We are told that, in the beginning, man was created in the "image of God." It was a spiritual image. That image, lost in the fall, is put back by the Saviour, our example, our Divine Redeemer; and that person only is truly man or woman who is God-like, Christ-like. Not long ago, we were whirling along in a fast train. It was in early morning. During the preceding night a mist had fallen, and settling on the branches of the trees and shrubs and grass, had been sufficiently heavy to form drops on their extremities. There spread out before us an extended landscape; but Oh, how lovely! The weather had changed in the night; and when morning came on shrub and tree and spear of grass, as far as the line which bound our vision, instead of drops of water, were globules of ice; and each one reflected the perfect image of the sun, who, though more than ninety millions of miles away, mirrored his face in each one of all the millions of these ice-globules: so that the landscape was as lovely as if God had rained down on all the earth a shower of diamonds, rubies, and sapphires. It was a picture we never shall allow to fade from our memory. Ay; was it not a type of the better land—a spiritual mirage, a temporary reflection of the heavenly world upon our earth-life? We thought of the golden streets and pearly gates, and rode on.

But there was another thought. As each one of all these millions of ice-globules bears an image of the distant sun, whose heat will soon dissipate them all back into the vapour from whence they have come, so we all may bear the image of God, we may reflect that image—the image of Him "whose throne is in the heavens, and whose kingdom ruleth over all"; whom the heaven of heavens can not contain, until we, too, return to Him.

Oh is it not a wonderful thought, that the distant sun should picture his face in the tiny dewdrop or frozen mist-drop? Is it not more wonderful that the great God, whose hand has sprinkled space with stars, and lighted up the deep vaults of ether with suns, by the "word of His power," should thus dwell in man, put His image on the heart of mortals? Oh, it is most wonderful! But it is true.

OUR NOTE BOOK.

MONDAY, August 6, was kept as a general holiday—all classes participating in the multifarious and special advantages offered. The day was all that could be desired, as it regarded the weather; and river, rail, and road were crowded by myriads of pleasure-seekers. With the exception of refreshment-rooms and public-houses, few places of business were open, and a Sabbath-like stillness pervaded the narrow streets of the City, usually blocked by the superabundant traffic, but now deserted, save by those who hurried to the railway-stations or steamboat-piers.

The Working Men's Club and Institute Union held its annual meeting recently. The number of these clubs has increased during the last fifteen years from fifty-four to 805. The present membership numbers 133,000. Dean Stanley (president of the Union), Mr. Samuel Morley, and others addressed the meeting, and while dwelling on the relations of capital and labour, looked hopefully to the results of these organisations.

General Grant is now on the Continent. He has laid the foundation-stone of an American church at Geneva.

Mr. Philip Phillips, the "Singing Pilgrim," has returned to America. The Rev. F. Bell, who is known in America as the

"Singing Preacher," has reached this country, and has already commenced his evangelistic labours.

Signor Gavazzi has been lecturing in various towns and cities of the United Kingdom. He stated in one of his addresses that the Italian Protestants had crowded congregations, and that among the recent converts were three of the Pope's pilgrims, one of them a landed proprietor in the Tyrol, and the other two priests, one French and the other Austrian.

The Rev. Jas. Webb has retired from the Chair of Classics at the Manchester Baptist College, and is succeeded by the Rev. J. T. Marshall, M.A., a student of Owens College, in that city. The Rev. E. Parker, of Farsloy, has been chosen president of the College, in place of the Rev. Henry Dowson, who has resigned the office.

Numerous attempts have been made to secularise the Lord's Day in the city of Melbourne, Australia, but hitherto religious feeling, combined with the determination of those who value Sunday as a day of rest, has prevailed, and public-houses are closed the whole day, and the Government up-country lines are free from Sunday trains.

The first annual meeting of the Domestic Economy Congress was held recently at Birmingham. The object of this new congress is to provide facilities for conferring upon all matters relating to domestic economy, and for considering how they may best be taught in our schools, with the view of securing national legislation upon the points thus brought to light. Many of the leaders in the social movements of the day were present, and took part in the various subjects discussed.

The Lord Mayor of London proceeded, on Saturday, August 4, to Rhondda Valley, and distributed the presents which has been awarded to the Tynnydd miners. Lord Aberdare afterwards, in the Queen's name, bestowed the Albert Medal upon those who were selected for their bravery in rescuing their fellow-workmen from the flooded colliery. The proceedings took place upon the summit of a mountain commanding a view of the valley, and it was estimated that 30,000 persons were present.

A telegram has been received from Australia announcing the safe arrival, at Melbourne, of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Varley.

The Marquis of Lorne has published a volume containing a new version of the Psalms, which he has dedicated to the Scottish Presbyterian Churches.

The Wesleyan Conference recently held at Bristol will be remembered in history as the last of the purely clerical conferences. The scheme of the Lay Representation Committee appointed last year at the Nottingham Conference, though altered in some of its details, was in the main adopted, and will take effect next year. The principal official appointments were:—President, Rev. W. B. Pope, D.D.; secretary, Rev. H. W. Williams, D.D.; governorship of Headingley College (tendered vacant by the resignation of the Rev. J. Farrar), the Rev. B. Hellier; secretaryship of Foreign Missions (vacancy caused by the death of the Rev. G. T. Perks), the Revs. C. E. Jenkins, M.A., and M. C. Osborne. There are now four secretaries to the latter department, the work having increased so much as to necessitate the appointment of an additional secretary.

The Methodist Free Church Assembly, which held its sittings at Louth, was brought to a close on Friday, August 3. The Rev. W. Griffiths was unanimously elected to the presidential chair, but as he had objected to be nominated, and begged the Assembly to release him from the appointment, the Rev. A. Holiday was elected in his stead. The Rev. W. Boyden was elected to the secretaryship. The Assembly has been spoken of as an exceptionally happy one.

The Bible Christian Conference has been held at Torquay, and was concluded on Friday, August 3. The Rev. T. E. Penwarden was elected president, and the Rev. J. C. Honey secretary. The number of members was stated to be 30,360, increase 1415, in addition to which there were 1917 on trial. Eighteen candidates were accepted for the ministry.

The three years' purchase-hire system is an exceedingly good one, and we are not surprised to find a company established (with a capital of £20,000) entitled, "The Plant and Machinery Supply Association," to supply all kinds of trade implements, from an anvil to a steam-engine, on this system. The terms seem liberal, and the farmer, manufacturer, or artisan who requires the goods, determines what he will have and where he will have it from; and the association provides it without bill of sale, registration, law costs, or fees; the only charge being a small sum for interest. Full particulars

can be obtained from the secretary, Great Western Arcade, Birmingham.

The Rev. T. H. Gregg, who recently succeeded from the English Established Church, has been consecrated a bishop in America. He has now returned to England, and taken charge of a congregation of the Reformed Episcopal Church at Southend. He is the first bishop of that church appointed for the United Kingdom.

The death of the Rev. Carstairs Douglas, LL.D., is recorded by the Scottish papers. Dr. Douglas was the author of a Chinese dictionary, and a distinguished Oriental scholar. Many years ago, in association with the late Rev. William Burns, he consecrated his life to the missionary cause in China, and was senior missionary of the Presbyterian Church in that country.

A gentleman at Bristol writes:—"For six years a decayed tooth prevented mastication on the side it was situated, as well as causing many sleepless nights; but having used Bunter's Nerveine, I am not only relieved of the most troublesome of all pains, but can now use the food without the slightest inconvenience."

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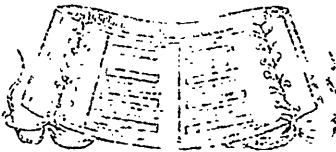
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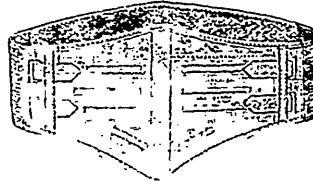
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SAYS THIS STARCH
IS THE BEST
SHE EVER
USED.

STARCH.