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ON THE DUTY OF FORGIVENESS.

BY REV. J. D. DUNOAN, PASTOR, &C.

PART II.

"Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven."

What we want to ascertain at present is this:—

Whether a person who has been injured or offended is laid under obligation by God to forgive the injury or offence, provided the person guilty of the injury or the offence does not exhibit any sense of, or sorrow for, the wrong done? Or to put it in this form: Does the neglect or refusal of the wrong-doer to make suitable acknowledgment exempt or preclude the person wronged from forgiving the wrong? Is this sorrow for, sense or acknowledgment of wrong-doing the prescribed and exclusive condition on which the offended or injured party can or ought consistently with due regard to all the interests involved, to grant forgiveness? Would he be in the path of duty were he to do so on any other condition? and is he now in the path of duty in abstaining from doing so, until that condition is fulfilled? Before giving a reply to this question, about which, after a somewhat protracted and careful investigation of the whole subject, we feel no manner of difficulty, it may be well in the outset to state some things respecting which there ought to be, and indeed is, agreement in sentiment.

For example: That one person may be forgiven of another, and yet unforgiven of God; and, of course, the reverse—namely, that one may be unpardoned by a fellow-mortal, and at the same time pardoned by God. The getting or not getting it does not affect vitally the relation in which one stand to God, but, on the other hand, the giving or not giving remission of the offence or injury does so affect the relation in which the other stands to God. It is

of importance to keep this in view, as it is fitted in the one case to excite alarm, and in the other impart comfort: alarm in the bosom of the one not giving—comfort to the heart of the other not getting pardon. The pardon, then, that is thus extended or withheld must just be taken for what it is worth; neither over-estimating nor under-estimating its value and efficacy. One may put it up at too high a mark; another pay too large a price for it.

Again, it is here assumed to be one's duty to forgive an offence or injury, in the event of the offender asking to be forgiven. This is so very obvious, that it would be an insult to your understanding to lead proof. That there are many in the world who refuse, even when asked to do so, to pardon offences, cannot be doubted. The unmerciful servant mentioned in the parable is the type of a class. Such conduct is denounced in the strongest possible terms, and will be most severely punished. It is conduct that God and all good men hold in just abhorrence, as that which not a single word can be urged in defence of; for which, while persisted in, no sort of excuse or extenuation can be offered. In consequence hereof, exclusion from the sympathy, countenance, friendship of God, will be the fate of the erring one, who will also be bereft of all well-grounded hope of admission to his presence at and after death.

Further, we take for granted that it is the bounden duty of the person giving offence or doing injury to ask the pardon of that injury or offence, from him to whom the offence has been given, or on whom the injury has been inflicted.

This point will not admit of controversy. Scripture makes this as plain as any matter can possibly be made. It is not a thing of inference, but of express, explicit precept, which no honest mind can misunderstand, or will attempt to explain away. And it is mean and wicked in any man who knows and is persuaded that he has done wrong, or given just offence to a brother, not to hasten at once and make all possible amends. The person who, being convinced that he has done injustice, neglects or even openly refuses to make reparation or give explanation, is put on a level with him who, though asked to do so, will not remit the offence. The conduct of the one is as reprehensible as that of the other. The offender and the offended are twin brothers. And the conduct of the one in refusing to ask forgiveness when convicted of an offence, and that of the other in refusing to extend it when asked, being alike deserving of the highest censure.

In addition to the foregoing, this also must be held as a settled point, to wit, that no doubt or difference exists as to the reality or gravity of the offence or injury complained of. Except and until this point be settled, we are not prepared to advance a single step towards the adjustment of any difficulty or dispute. In truth, unless this be first of all determined, there is actually nothing to be adjusted. For nothing can be plainer, and indeed nothing is more common than for persons to differ as to what constitutes an offence or injury. One man may take umbrage at what another will thank you for; and instead of laying it to the accounts of enmity, will regard it as a mark of friendship. Thus if you rebuke a scorner he will hate you, but if "a wise man he will love you." The difference resides not in the thing done, but in the parties whom respectively the thing done affects. The reproof is the same in

either case, but in the bosom of the one it excites hatred, in that of the other love; to the one it is a benefit, to the other an evil.

How, then, is this point to be decided, supposing the parties themselves differ about it? Upon whom, in this case, will the task devolve, of saying whether it is or is not an offence or injury?

Not upon the alleged offender, for he would, of course, exculpate himself; not upon the offended, for he, as might be expected, would criminate the other. To hold that either the assumed offender or the offended is entitled to settle this, is virtually to constitute the one or other of them both judge and jury; that is, lay at his disposal the privilege of both sifting the evidence and pronouncing the decision—a thing repugnant to reason, to justice, and to common-sense. The assumed offender has no right to ask the offended to suppress his convictions, or suspend the exercise of his reason in the matter: nor, on the other hand, has the offended any more right to prefer that request to the offender. When the alleged offender stoutly affirms that he has given no offence, that does not prove that he has given none: on the other hand, when the offended as strenuously declares that he has given offence, that is no evidence that he actually has given it. The affirmative on either side is nothing to the purpose—settles absolutely nothing—does not even approximate to the settlement of the matter in dispute.

There must, then, be some other way in which this dubious or controverted subject can be fairly and finally settled. The religion of Jesus Christ would be essentially defective if there were not. I know of only two ways in which this can be attained.

The first, which is the quietest, least offensive, and, on that account most likely to prove effective, is to commit the case to some neutral parties, and abide by their

decision. That this is a scriptural and most Christian mode of determining that which is doubtful, and one which, if more generally adopted, would prevent a large amount of mischief, cannot be denied. At the same time it seems to be optional with the contending parties themselves to receive or reject this plan of ending the dispute. The person declining, however, must be prepared to take the responsibility of not adopting a mode of healing discord and division that has the sanction and often receives the blessing of God.

The next and only other way that I know of is, by the more formal and public reference of the matter to "the Church;" that is, to those upon whom the duty of deciding such matters has been laid by the great Head of the Church Himself. If the decision, first of the lower or inferior court of that church, is reclaimed against; then that of the next higher is set aside; and finally, that of the highest of all disregarded—then I know of no other way on earth whereby it can be brought to a conclusion. The person is impracticable; his case is hopeless. His own will is his rule, and his own view of it is against that of all else besides. He must be left to time, to truth, to God, in the charitable hope and belief that he will come to clearer views and a better spirit.

The question as thus disentangled from, and disencumbered of kindred and relative truths and principles, presents itself in this naked form:—On the supposition that an offence or injury is a real, grave—not an imaginary or trivial offence or injury, as is admitted by the parties themselves, or as is declared by the competent and rightly-constituted judges; and on the supposition, moreover, that the person guilty of that offence or injury does not repent of and seek forgiveness of that offence or injury—is the injured or offended party bound to forgive him?

It will be admitted that what God requires can only be discovered from what He has revealed and recorded in His written Word. To that word we must of necessity appeal.

In answer, then, to the question as now proposed, or in its present form, I would state it as my rooted conviction, that it is the duty of Christians, under all circumstances, to forgive every offence or injury whatsoever. I shall in a very few sentences state, in general terms, the ground whereon that conviction is based, and then note some of the most common and plausible objections that are urged against this view of the subject.

It is based on those Scriptures, too numerous to quote, in which we are exhorted, in this respect especially, to be imitators of God; those also that enjoin upon us the cultivation and exercise of a spirit of forgiveness, and which contain no allusion to penitence on the part of the offender or offenders; and those, moreover, that require us rather to endure actual wrong and injustice, even when redress could be obtained, than enter upon a contest or controversy from which evil is likely to ensue; such, furthermore, as render it our imperative duty to love, and, in all possible ways, do good, even to those who are our known and avowed and bitter enemies; and, above all, such passages as hold up to our view not only the example of eminent saints, but that of our Lord and Master Himself, in exhibiting towards those whose inveterate malice and malignity brought upon Him shame and death, a spirit of tenderness and love. It would be simply impossible, in the space presently at our disposal, to examine in detail and with minuteness one or more of those passages. Nor, indeed, is it necessary, for it is not likely that such examination, if entered upon, would be of any service to those persons upon whose minds the simple reading of them does not

produce the intended effect. For the most part, it will be found that when the general drift or bearing of a passage fails to make an impression of the right kind, a more rigid investigation will be found to be insufficient for that purpose. Indeed, such an investigation begun in certain states of mind, will lead to an entirely opposite result—to a confirming of the person in his erroneous belief and injurious conduct.

To the view now advanced it is objected—

That God Himself does not forgive the sinner until he repents and asks forgiveness, and that we are taught to pray that "He would forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." That is, expressed in direct and plain terms, we are at liberty virtually to put ourselves in the place of, or stand in this respect side by side with God Himself. But surely a single moment's calm reflection will serve to show to every unbiassed mind that this is a monstrous error and most mischievous assumption. The dealing of a perfect being with one who is imperfect, must ever essentially differ from the transaction of one imperfect mortal with another equally and obviously imperfect. The perfect One, in every case, is all right, but the imperfect all wrong; whereas the two imperfect beings are almost always mutually in error. Would you, then, put one who is imperfect on a footing with One who is Perfect, and invest him with the right to exact, as the condition of forgiveness, what He, as the Governor and Judge of the world, must demand from all who have broken His laws?

Besides, is it not the fact that God, for Christ's sake, pardons innumerable sins that we are never even conscious of, and of which we cannot, of course, make specific confession? Does any one fancy that

it is only those sins that he knows of and confesses which God pardons?

But, in addition to all this, the disposition even to repent of and acknowledge those sins of heart and life that we do know of is, equally with the pardon itself, the gift of God's grace. In every conceivable respect it is free and undeserved, from His offer of that pardon to our glad acceptance of that offer. Therein there can be no parallel between the principle on which He acts, as righteous Ruler and Judge, in requiring from all rebels against His authority repentance and confession, and that on which we are enjoined to act in reference to those who have wronged us—not the slightest, except in this respect, that the forgiveness we extend should be unconditional, full, and "from the heart."

It is objected also that it is expressly stated or stipulated, as the condition on which the offence can be pardoned, that the offender should repent of the offence, and ask to be pardoned. I know of no such passage as that to which reference is made in this objection; I know of no scripture in which it is expressed or implied that such condition is to be exacted. The only passages in the whole New Testament, that we can remember, which seems to countenance this heathenish notion—for purely heathenish it undoubtedly is—will be found in the gospel by Luke, chap. xvii., verse 4th. It reads thus: "And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him." Now, what is the meaning of this Scripture? What does it teach relative to the point under discussion? It teaches, *first*, that it is the duty of the offender to acknowledge his offence. We do not, I presume, differ as to this circumstance. But it teaches, *second*, that it is the duty of the person offended to forgive the offence when forgiveness is asked. About this, too, we

eyes. But does it, in addition, teach this third thing—this worldly maxim, this *avergo* lesson—that if the person offending does not ask pardon, the person offended is not to forgive him? Will any one so far forget himself as force the Word of God to teach such an utterly diabolical doctrine as this? so give himself up to the bewildering influence of passion, as to affirm that God, in this or in any other part of His Word, sanctions such a principle, or will indicate approval of such a course as this?

The simple object of the verse is to teach the two lessons already mentioned, namely, that on the one hand it is the duty of the offender to acknowledge the offence; and, on the other, the duty of the offended to forgive the offence when so acknowledged. And the reason is obvious, that, while some are very averse to make confession of wrong-doing, there are many who, like the unmerciful servant in the parable, refuse, even when asked to do so, to forgive an offence. But to say that, over and above these obvious and important lessons, it permits and requires and approves of our withholding forgiveness, even when not asked, is a gross and wicked perversion and abuse of the Word of God. Does it not strike you as something remarkable, that while there is only one passage that even distantly seems to sanction the view I have been combating, there are so very many passages that broadly and boldly enjoin the duty of forgiveness, without the slightest allusion to condition of any kind whatever? As if (for this is the impression this fact makes upon one's mind); as if, after all, it were not a matter of great moment to him personally, or one about which he ought to feel over-anxious, whether the offender acknowledged the offence or not, his duty as the offended being summed up in the extension or exercise of a heart-forgiveness of it.

It is objected, moreover, that the forgiv-

ing of an offence for which no repentance has been felt, nor regret expressed, may be construed into an approval of the offender's injurious conduct. This is a groundless apprehension. It is an evil that can easily be guarded against. We all know how to prevent any such abuse. The objection—about which nothing more need be said—is utterly destitute of point and force, and unworthy even of notice. How could any sane man, hearing that I had freely and unconditionally forgiven an offence against me, suppose—or how could the person himself, though the dullest of the dull, to show the offence had been forgiven, possibly infer that this was an approval of the offence!—a tacit admission on my part that he had done no evil!!—an expression of my conviction, that instead of censure he merited commendation!!!

It is, furthermore, objected, that if forgiveness be extended on such terms as these, it will invite and embolden the offender to continue and even multiply his offences. This is a complete and most injurious mistake or misapprehension, as it will not be difficult in a single sentence or two, to show. For, first, it implies a disgraceful ignorance of those Scriptures which enjoin us over and over again, to bless, to pray for, to do good to, and love those who have done to us, and continue doing to us, and saying about us, all manner of evil. And all this these same Scriptures enjoin upon us, with the view and for the avowed object of bringing these evil-doers to other views and another mind. And yet, forsooth, there are some who are afraid to forgive the perverse and impenitent offender, lest it should have the effect of encouraging him in his evil courses! Such fear is not of the right kind, and is entirely misplaced.

But, again, this objection displays a not less disgraceful ignorance of human nature, which, as testimony, observation, and ex-

perience conspire to show, can be more easily and deeply moved or wrought upon by kindness than severity—by unexpected and undeserved concessions and advances, than by hard and haughty and inflexible demands—by a gentle and generous and gratuitous forgiveness, than by a harsh, persistent, and rigid exaction. Thus, “if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head;” that is, if the thing is to be done, or can be done at all, melt his hard heart, dissolve him in tears of contrition, and lead him captive with the silken cords of Christian love. These, so far as known to us, are some of the more common objections urged against the view I have now advanced, and which, I believe, is strictly in harmony with the truth of Scripture. How well or ill-grounded such objections are, and how much or little weight is to be attached to them, I leave you to judge. This only would I say to those with whose minds they do have weight, that their religion in this particular is not one whit better than that of the men of the world; that the consequences certain to ensue from such principles of action are simply frightful to contemplate; that such a belief must utterly indispose and incapacitate them from making any real, hearty attempt to gain the offender, and put an insuperable barrier in the way of your spiritual profit and progress; and, above all, oblige you to misrepresent and reflect deep, dark dishonour on Him whose Name is “Lord;” and to resemble and dwell with whom they declare it to be their sincere and supreme desire. Amen.

VESSEL of clay! He who made thee has a right to destroy; but, far from seeking thy destruction, He labours to avert it. He menaces in mercy; and, if thou perishest, thou art self-destroyed.

EXPLANATIONS NEEDED.

Why a physician can't leave his office an hour on Sunday to attend religious services, for fear there might be a call for him, and yet can leave it several hours daily during the week to visit his patients.

Why a lawyer can't offer up a prayer of five minutes in public, and yet can plead for hours in court.

Why a farmer can't give but a dollar or two towards building a mission church, and yet can buy and pay for a farm.

Why a tradesman is so wearied that he can only attend morning service on Sunday, and yet is able to work equally hard and late every week day.

Why some people can't go to church when it rains or looks like it, and yet rain never stops them in their occupation, though they get a little wet.

Why a wealthy man can't afford to give anything to build a church, adding value to his property, and yet can build houses every year.

Why some parents are not competent to instruct in the Sunday-school, and yet are competent to instruct their children at home, and even their neighbours in politics, and in theology, too.

Why a tax-payer can't pay anything to support the kingdom of God, and yet pays three per cent, or five, to support his government.

The above are only a few specimens of an endless number and variety of things that we have seen and thought over, but were never able to explain. Those so doing may be able to, and we should be glad if they would, either in the paper or to their consciences. We hope they will be prepared to do so, for certainly it will be insisted on, *one day*.—*Congregationalist*.

DELAY DANGEROUS.—How dangerous to defer those momentous reformations which conscience is solemnly preaching to the heart! If they are neglected, the difficulty and indisposition are increasing every month. The mind is receding, degree after degree, from the warm and hopeful zone; till, at last, it will enter the arctic circle, and become fixed in relentless and eternal ice!—*Foster*.

STEPPING-STONES.

"Heigh-Ho! a weary life I lead of it!" thought Martha Bean, as she crossed the brook, carrying home her milk-pail. "I'm sure 'tis work, work, from morning till night; I might as well be an African slave. There's poor mother crippled with the rheumatism, not able to rise from her chair without help, much less to look after the half-a-dozen children that my brother has landed upon us, so all the trouble and nursing and work come on me. I'm sure that to be kept awake half the night with a squalling baby, when I've to labour hard all the day, is enough to drive a girl wild. It's never a holiday I get, and as for a new dress or bonnet, where's the money to buy it, with all those children to feed and clothe? It's a weary life," Martha repeated, as she entered the cottage where her sick mother sat wrapped up in flannels by the fire, with the baby asleep in a cradle beside her. Mrs. Bean was weak and full of aches and pains, but from those gentle lips no murmur ever was heard.

"Well, Martha, you're home early," she said, greeting her daughter with a smile.

"Yes, mother, because I have not now that long way to go round by the bridge."

"It was an excellent plan of the squire to put those convenient stepping-stones across the river," said Mrs. Bean.

Martha set down her pail on the brick-paved floor, and threw herself on a chair with a weary sigh. "I wish that there were stepping-stones over the river of trouble," cried she, "for I don't see how poor folk like us are ever to get across."

"There are stepping-stones, dear Martha," said her mother; "and many a one has found them that would have been drowned in trouble without them."

"Stepping-stones! what do you mean?" cried Martha, looking with surprise at the quiet sufferer as she spoke.

"There are three, my child, that God Himself has set in the dreary waters, that His people may pass in safety over the difficult way. They are—prudence, patience, and prayer. By *prudence* we shun many a trouble which overwhelms the careless and giddy. By *patience* we get over those troubles which God sends to

prove and to try us. And when the bitter waters rise high, and we feel as if we must sink beneath them, then the Christian, trembling and weary, finds firm footing in prayer."

Dear reader, at some period of your journey through life, you will have to pass the river of trouble; may you then seek and find these safe stepping-stones—

PRUDENCE, PATIENCE, AND PRAYER.

—A. L. O. E.

Who are these and whence came they?

Not from Jerusalem alone,
To heaven the path ascends;
As near, as sure, as straight the way
That leads to the celestial day,
From farthest realms extends;
Frigid or torrid zone.

What matters how or whence we start?
One is the crown to all;
One is the hard but glorious race,
Whatever be our starting-place;—
Rings round the earth the call
That says, Arise, Depart!

From the balm-breathing, sun-loved isles
Of the bright Southern Sea,
From the dead North's cloud-shadow'd pole,
We gather to one glad some goal,—
One common home in Thee,
City of sun and smiles!

The cold rough b'low hinders none;
Nor helps the calm, fair main;
The brown rock of Norwegian gloom,
The verdure of Tahitian bloom,
The sands of Mizraim's plain,
Or peaks of Lebanon.

As from the green lands of the vine,
So from the snow-wastes pale,
We find the ever open road
To the dear city of our God;
From Russian steppe, or Burnian vale,
Or terraced Palestine.

Not from swift Jordan's sacred stream
Alone we mount above;
Indus or Danube, Thames or Rhone,
Rivers unsainted and unknown;—
From each the home of love
Beckons with heavenly gleam.

Not from gray Olivet alone
We see the gates of light:
From Morven's heath or Jungfrau's snow
We welcome the descending glow
Of pearl and chrysolite,
And the unsetting sun.

Not from Jerusalem alone
The Church ascends to God;
Strangers of every tongue and clime,
Pilgrims of every land and time,
Throng the well-trodden road
That leads up to the throne.

—Bonar.

WHITEFIELD.

In the study of Whitefield's life, we feel that we have to do with a man who lived and spoke, and would have died to deter his hearers from the paths of destruction, and to bring them to holiness. His *eighteen thousand sermons*, with all their variations, are but on two key-notes: man is guilty, but may obtain forgiveness; he is immortal, and ripens here for endless weal or woe hereafter. Thoroughly and continually in earnest, when he came before his audience he looked like one who had been with God, and would fain bring his hearers into communion with him.

He would rise sometimes when about to preach, and looking around in silence on his vast audience for a minute or two, as if salvation or perdition teemed in every look; meanwhile the contagion seemed to reach every heart. Then he struck everywhere, and swayed the sword of the Spirit (his glittering weapon) in every direction; and thus, too, within cushioned and carpeted pulpits, to lords and ladies, and at other times encountered a mob of merry andrews, with the boldness and power of one who had received his commission immediately from heaven. Endowed with every charm of voice and action, filled with the spirit of grace, he spoke with such zeal, power and effect, unparalleled probably since the apostles' days. His sacred ambition was contented with nothing less than the conversion of thousands. He was indeed a burning and a shining light—a kind of human seraph raised up to shine in a dark place and a dark time. His zeal and light were not *wild-fire*, but directed by good, sound doctrine, and penetrating discretionary powers.

The Lord gave him a manner peculiarly his own; he copied from no man, and none could imitate him with success. He was in sacred eloquence what Handel was in music, but the preaching of the Messiah accomplished infinitely greater wonders. The *American Quarterly Register* reports, that in this country (America) between twenty and thirty thousand were added to the Christian church by his instrumentality. O the melting power, the exquisite pathos, the tender expostulations of this pre-eminent man and unrivalled preacher

of the gospel of our salvation. He was an *orator*, but he only sought to be an *evangelist*. Like a volcano where gold and gems are ejected as well as common things, splendid imageries were portrayed and exhibited from his pulpit, but all were merged in the stream which bore along the good news. But neither energy, eloquence, talent, nor splendour of style, nor the most genuine sincerity and self-devotedness, nor all those united, would have enabled him successfully to mould millions of hearts to his will, in his own day, and generations yet unborn. The secret lies deeper; had he been less *prayerful* he would have been less *powerful*. He was DEVOTIONAL, DIRECT, AND DECIDEDLY EVANGELICAL; all life; a living preacher; a living theme; a living power; giving life and spreading it all around. His thoughts were possessions, and his feelings transformations; he spoke because he felt; his hearers understood, because they saw. It was not an oration beautifully prepared and read before his audience for their acceptance and admiration, but a direct address, a solemn appeal, a message from God to them. Every sermon was full of Christ; to set *Him forth* in the glories of His wonderful person, the varieties of His office, the perfection of His righteousness, the completeness of His atonement, and the plenitude of His grace, was his perpetual aim at all times and every place. It was a *full, clear, consistent* gospel. He could not be calm or cold on such a subject; but with much of the melting tenderness of Him who wept over Jerusalem, he spoke to all who resorted to him. Therefore it was that life followed in the region of death, and at his coming the desert rejoiced and blossomed as the rose.

Whitefield laboured for the *promotion of union without uniformity* among all denominations. Though an ordained minister of the Church of England, yet he appears to be quite at home everywhere among the family of God's children; and it is observable that by far the greatest number of his sermons were preached in connection with nonconformists. He was no party man, and had no patience for ecclesiastical or denominational details.

When he visited Scotland, the excellent Messrs. Ebenezer and Ralph Erskine, who left the Established Church chiefly on ac-

count of its cold formalism, wished him to preach only in connection with their body, and help forward the work in which they were engaged. To this, however, he objected, regarding himself as an evangelist at large. "I'll preach Christ," said he, "wherever they will let me." Yet he dearly loved the good brethren, and laboured with them very cordially, and God blessed his labours in the conversion of many souls.

After preaching in the Orphan House Park, to a large and attentive audience, some of the nobility came to bid him God speed, and among others a portly Quaker, a nephew of the Messrs. Erskine, who, taking him by the hand, said, "Friend George, I am as thou art; I am for bringing all to the life and power of the ever-living God: and therefore, if thou wilt not quarrel with me about my hat, I will not quarrel with thee about thy gown." He visited Scotland no less than fourteen times. He says, "Could I preach ten times a day, thousands and thousands would attend. Never did I see so many Bibles and people looking into them; plenty of tears flow."

Thus lived and died this noble champion for God and truth, whose voice could be heard by upwards of twenty thousand at a time, and frequently preaching three times in a working day, and in the course of a week receive a thousand letters from persons awakened by his ministry, and at the end of a charity sermon collect more than three thousand dollars for the poor. He received three hundred and fifty hopeful and happy converts in one day, and he crossed the Atlantic thirteen times in his great Master's work. In view of all this (and it is only a bird's-eye view we can now obtain, but the day is coming which shall declare it), here we can only exclaim, What hath God wrought! "Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?"—*Extract from Memoirs of Mr. Whitefield.*

HUMILITY is both a grace and a vessel to receive grace. There are none that see so much need of grace as humble souls; there are none that prize grace like humble souls; there are none that improve grace like humble souls; therefore God singles out the humble soul to fill him to the brim with grace, while the proud are sent empty away.

THE ASCENSION.

Let us follow Jesus to the mount called Olivet. His closing counsels given, He leads His disciples out of the city. Did they, in open day, pass along through the streets of Jerusalem? If they did, how many wondering eyes would rest upon the well-known group of Galilean fishermen; how many wondering eyes would fix upon the leader of that group—the Jesus of Nazareth, whom six weeks before they had seen hanging upon the cross at Calvary. Little heeding the looks which they attract, they pass through the city gate. They are now on a well-known track; they cross the Kedron; they approach Gethsemane. We lose sight of them amid the deep shadows of these olive-trees. Has Jesus paused for a moment to look, for the last time, with those human eyes of His, upon the sacred spot where He cast Himself, on the night of his great agony, upon the ground? Once more they emerge; they climb the hill-side; they cross its summit; they are approaching Bethany. He stops; they gather round. He looks upon them; He lifts His hands; He begins to bless them. What love unutterable in that parting look! what untold riches in that blessing! His hands are uplifted; His lips are engaged in blessing, when slowly He begins to rise: earth has lost her power to keep; the waiting, up-drawing heavens claim Him as their own. An attraction stronger than our globe is on Him, and declares its power. He rises! but still as He floats upward through the yielding air, His eyes are bent on these up-looking men; His arms are stretched over them in the attitude of benediction, His voice is heard dying away in blessings as He ascends. Awe-struck, in silence they follow Him with straining eyeballs, as His body lessens to sight, in its retreat upward into that deep blue, till the commissioned cloud enfolds, cuts off all further vision, and closes the earthly and sensible communion between Jesus and His disciples. That cloudy chariot bore Him away, till He was 'received up into heaven, and sat down on the right hand of God.'

How simple, yet how sublime, how pathetic this parting! No disturbance of the elements, no chariot of fire, no escort of

angels; nothing to disturb or distract the little company from whom He parts; nothing to the very last to break in upon that close and brotherly communion, which is continued as long as looking eye and listening ear can keep it up. But who shall tell us, when these earthly links were broken, and that cloud carried Him to the farthest point in which cloud could form or float, and left him there; who shall tell us what happened above, beyond, on the way to the throne; in what new form of glory, by what swift flight, attended by what angel escort, accompanied by what burst of angelic praise, that throne of the universe was reached? Our straining eyes, we too would turn upward to those heavens which received Him, and wonder at the reception which awaited Him there, till on our ears there falls that gentle rebuke, 'Why stand ye gazing up into heaven?' 'Think not with eyes like yours to pierce that cloud which hides the world of spirits from mental vision. Enough for you to know that this same Jesus shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go.'

This mild rebuke was given to the men of Galilee upon the mountain-top by two men in white apparel, who stood beside them, their presence unnoted till their words had broken the deep silence, and drawn upon themselves that gaze hitherto directed towards heaven, but which had now nothing above on which to rest; two angels, perhaps the two who had watched and waited by the empty sepulchre; one of them the same who, in the hour of His great agony, had been sent to strengthen the sinking Saviour in the Garden, now stationed here at Olivet to soften, as it were, to the disciples the sorrow of this parting, to turn that sorrow into joy. But how, at that moment when they were discharging this kindly but humble office, were the heavenly host engaged? Surely, if at the emerging out of chaos of this beautiful and orderly creation, those sons of God chanted together the new world's birthday hymn; surely, if in that innumerable host above the plains of Bethlehem, a great multitude of them celebrated, in notes of triumph, a still better and more glorious birth,—the entire company of the heavenly host must have struck their harps to the fullest, noblest, richest anthems that ever they gave

forth, as the great Son of God, the Saviour of mankind—His earthly sorrows over, His victories over Satan, sin, and death complete—sat down that day with the Father on His throne, far above all principalities and powers, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come. Did these two angels who were left behind on earth, who had this humbler task assigned them, feel at all as if theirs were a lower, meaner service? No, they had too much of the spirit of Him who had for forty days kept that throne waiting, to which He had now ascended, that He might tabernacle still a little longer with the children of men; nor were they ignorant of that word of His, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these My little ones, ye have done it unto Me.'

'Why gaze ye up into heaven? This same Jesus shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.' This is not a final departure of this Jesus from the world He came to save. That was not the last look the earth was ever to get of Him that you got of Him as the clouds covered Him from your view. He is to come again; to come in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. But for that, perhaps the disciples might have returned to Jerusalem with sad and downcast spirits, as those from whose head their Master had been forever taken away. As it was, they returned, we are told, with great joy, the sorrow of the departure swallowed up in the hope of the speedy return. So vivid, indeed, was the expectation cherished by the first Christians of the second advent of the Lord, that it needed to be chastened and restrained.—They required to have their hearts directed into a patient waiting for that coming.—It is very different with us. We require to have that faith quickened and stimulated, which they needed to have chastened and restrained. It is more with wonder than with great joy that we return from witnessing the ascension of our Lord. But let us remember, that though the heavens have received Him, it is not to keep Him, there apart for ever from this world. He Himself cherishes no such feeling of retirement and separation now that He has ascended up on high. I have spoken to you

of His last words of blessing which fell audibly upon fleshly ears. But what are the very last words that in vision He uttered: 'He that testifieth these things, saith, Surely, I come quickly.' Our crowned Saviour waits; with eager expectancy waits the coming of the day when His presence shall be again revealed among us. It may seem slow to us, that evolution of the ages which is preparing all things for His approach. But with Him, who says, I come quickly, one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day; and as soon as the curtain shall drop on the last act of that great drama of which this earth is now the theatre, then, quick as love and power can carry Him, shall the same Jesus be here again on earth,—coming in like manner as these men of Galilee saw him go up to heaven. Are we waiting for that coming, longing for that coming, hastening to that coming? Are we ready, as He says to us, 'Behold, I come quickly,' to add as our response, 'Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.'—*Rev. William Hanna, LL.D.*

THE WORLD.

"The world is a lying, empty pageant; and men are ensnared with the show. My part in it, as a Christian, is to act with simplicity as the servant of God. What does God bid me do? What, in this minute of time, which will soon be gone, and carry me with it into eternity—what is my path of duty? While enemies blaspheme, and friends are beguiled, let me stand on my watch-tower, with the prophet, "listening to what the Lord God will say unto me." In any scheme of man I dare not be drunken. We, who are of the day, must be sober. The sentiment of the multitude is ensnaring; but the multitude is generally wrong. I must beware of the contagion. Not that I am to push myself into consequence. The matter is between me and God—not one step out of a holy quiet and obscurity, but as the servant of God."—*Cecil.*

"The world that knew not Jesus when he came, is the same world still; and Jesus, who was despised and crucified by the world, is the same Jesus still. Are we in Christ? Then Christ is formed in us, and

dwells in us, and Christ in us lives and feels, even as he lived, and thought, and felt, when he was in the world. The love of the world is enmity with God."—*Hewitson.*

A WORD TO MINISTERS.

"Inspired apostles have not been the only persons who have burned with intense desire to save souls. Of Alleine, the author of *An Alarm to Unconverted Sinners*, it is said, that 'he was infinitely and insatiably greedy of the conversion of souls: and to this end he poured out his very heart in prayer and in preaching.' Bunyan said: 'In my preaching, I could not be satisfied unless some fruits did appear in my work.' 'I would think it a greater happiness,' said Matthew Henry, 'to gain one soul to Christ than mountains of silver and gold to myself.' Doddridge, writing to a friend, remarked, 'I long for the conversion of souls more sensibly than for anything besides.' Similar is the death-bed testimony of Brown of Heddington: 'Now, after near forty years' preaching of Christ, I think I would rather beg my bread all the labouring days of the week, for an opportunity of publishing the gospel on the Sabbath, than, without such a privilege, to enjoy the richest possessions on earth.—Oh! labour, labour,' said he to his sons, 'to win souls to Christ.' Brainerd could say, 'I cared not where or how I lived, or what hardships I went through, so that I could but gain souls to Christ.' While I was asleep, I dreamed of these things; and when I waked, the first thing I thought of was this great work.'

"Alas! how few of us are thus engrossed with our work! Beloved brethren, let us desire success—let us expect success—let us persevere in using the means adopted by God to procure success; and let us continue to do so, and is it not certain that we shall succeed? How can it be otherwise? Is it not written, 'TAKE HEED UNTO THYSELF, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee?' (1 Tim. iv. 15, 16).

"Lastly AND CHIEFLY, let our own communion with our Divine Master be intimate and incessant. In 'doing the work of evangelists,' let us, 'take heed to ourselves'—let us 'watch' over ourselves 'in all things; let us be, and not seem to be, all that we inculcate upon others; so shall we 'make full proof of our ministry,' and return to our respective parishes in 'pecco, and visit our habitations, and not sin' (Job v. 24)."

SCOTTISH TENT-PREACHING.

“Tent-preaching” is confined wholly, we believe, to Scotland of these British islands, although the Welsh have gatherings having some points of resemblance. It is an institution, as we suppose, altogether Scottish; and in these latter days it is confined almost wholly to the Highlands of Scotland. It dates as far back as the Reformation. In those days the word of the Lord was a strange sound, and scarce, and was therefore precious. Crowds greater than could be conveniently contained by any building, however large, gathered whenever and wherever Knox, or any of the leaders of the Reformation preached; and preacher and hearers generally adjourned to the open air. In the times of the Covenant, again, the people were compelled to worship wherever they could hurriedly gather on a hasty summons, and the rocks, caves, and dens of the far north have all echoed many a time and oft to the joyful sound of the glorious gospel. Tradition points still, in almost every locality, to the spot where, with or without a tent, the persecuted remnant gathered to worship the God of their fathers.

In Scotland, besides, the reformers proceeded on the theory that baptism came to us in the room of circumcision, and the Lord's supper in the room of the Passover. They thought that as the Passover was an annual feast, the Lord's supper ought to be so likewise; consequently the communion was dispensed only once a year. In country parishes this ancient usage is still observed. Gradually in town parishes there came to be a winter and a summer sacrament, which usage still obtains in most of the country towns. In some of the larger towns there are four, and in some congregations as many as six, celebrations in a year; in a few congregations it is still more frequent.

A fast day, with a day of preparation, usually Saturday, precedes the communion sabbath; and since the famous revival at the Kirk of Shotts, there is a thanksgiving on the Monday following. And so the whole service, extending over nearly a week, is known as “the preachings.” A great many ministers gather to take part in the work, and people came together from neighbouring parishes. Often the tent is erected

in the churchyard, and there preaching, praise, and prayer go on, while the communion service is proceeding within. In Scotland, too, one part of the church is so arranged that the pews form “tables.” These, on a communion sabbath, are covered with a white linen cloth; and as only comparatively few can partake of the bread and wine at the same service, and as there is an address, usually of some length, to the communicants both before and after the bread and wine are handed round, the whole work of the day extends over many hours.

The tent has long become a thing of the past, saving only in here and there a parish, and in many parts of the Highlands. Even open air preaching was hardly known in the general deadness that had settled down on the land during the middle and latter part of last century. It was revived chiefly by those two noble men, the Haldanes, and chiefly by the younger brother, whose commanding presence and clear, full, rich voice admirably fitted him for so arduous and self-denying a work. The writer remembers very distinctly “the tent” of his native parish. It was a simple wooden erection, and was so constructed as that it could be taken in pieces when not in use. It lay rotting in a sort of aisle of the parish church. A green field bordering on the churchyard bears the name of “the Tenter-hill” to this day; the tent itself the writer saw turned into firewood. But open air preaching is still very popular in Scotland. The people take kindly and easily to it. In the summer of the year 1843, when more than five hundred congregations had to be provided with new places of worship on a very short notice, the great majority of the country people for many months worshipped out of doors; the old people went forth with their chairs, stools, and Bibles in a cheery way, as they do who are but falling back on an old habit; and it was remarked, through many a district, that they had hardly a single wet sabbath all that summer, nor till late in the autumn, when most of the churches were ready for the occupants.

In the Highlands the tent was in constant requisition at communion seasons, and on other great occasions. In the biography of a Highland minister, not long

ago published, we read:—"Many from surrounding parishes were among his stated hearers. A few regularly walked about twenty miles each sabbath. To one at least the sabbath journey was nearly thirty miles; for she came from the confines of Sutherland. Leaving home about midnight on Saturday, she walked across the hills regularly in summer, and often in winter, and generally without any companion by the way. After the service on sabbath she returned to her home, and was ready to join in the labour of the farm next morning."

It is within the knowledge of the present writer, that during the revival that took place in Dundee and neighbourhood under Mr. M'Cheyne, when the sacrament was dispensed at Blairgowrie, many little companies of the female workers in the flax-mills of Dundee started for Blairgowrie on Saturday night, after the close of their week's labour, walked the distance, more than twenty miles, attended all the services there till late on sabbath evening, and returned on foot, so as to be at their work by six o'clock on Monday morning. And the way never seemed long; they sang the songs of Zion as they went, and He who joined the disciples on the way to Emmaus was with them; and Christ for a companion makes the longest road short.

But to return from this digression to the recollections of the Highland minister. Here is another extract:—"The time for beginning the service arrived, and the preacher went to the meeting-place. The tent in which he stood was constructed with oars, in the form of a cone, covered with blankets, and having an opening in front, with a board fixed across it on which the Bible was placed." Here is another extract:—"During the first half of his ministry the sacrament of the Lord's supper was dispensed only once a year, and generally on the first sabbath of August. Great crowds were accustomed to assemble on such occasions. As many as ten thousand people have met on a communion sabbath, and nearly two thousand communicants have sat at the table of the Lord. These large assemblies were, of course, in the open air. The place of meeting was a large quarry, not far from the church. In front of the rock, which, with the strata

of earth that covered it, rose to a height of about a hundred feet, and between two mounds of the rubbish that had been removed during the process of excavation, the minister's tent was erected. There was level ground in front of it, on which the communion tables were placed, and on either side, tier above tier, rose the vast multitude of people. All were able to hear the voice of the preacher, and even its echo from the rock. Sometimes a few adventurous people sat just on the edge of the precipice; but if the preacher was prone to be nervous, it was not safe for him to look up to the group on the gallery of the church in the quarry."

The conditions of society which necessitated tent-preaching have passed away in great measure. The "tent" will still linger for a little longer in some out-of-the-way parishes, where changes come slowly. But the "pulpit of wood," such as that from which Ezra expounded the law in the audience of all the people, will be needed till the day dawn when no man shall any more need to say to his brother, "Know the Lord," for all shall know him. A portable pulpit like Ezra's—like that which Mr. M'Cheyne caused to be made for himself, and which he used in the few last years of his ministry,—like that which the working men of his congregation presented to Dr. Miller, of Birmingham,—a pulpit like that, from which the gospel may be more easily and readily preached to the poor, is what we much need in our day, and specially in all our great towns, where so many thousands are growing up in ignorance of God and of his glorious and blessed gospel.—*Sunday at Home.*

REMEMBER that God is no curious or critical observer of the plain expressions that fall from his poor children when they are in their closet duties; 'tis not a flow of words, or studied notions, seraphical expressions, or elegant phrases in prayer, which take the ear, or delight the heart of God, or open the gate of glory, or bring down the best of blessings upon the soul; but uprightness, holiness, heavenliness, spirituality, and brokenness of heart—these are the things that make a conquest upon God, and turn most to the soul's account.—*Brooks.*

PICTURES FROM THE BOOK.

THE STRANGE LAWSUIT AND THE WISE JUDGE.

Two young but erring women, alike daughters of frailty, went to sleep one night in the same house, with their newly-born infants in their bosoms; but death, which ever follows hard upon the heels of life, had overtaken and extinguished the lately kindled spark in one of them. The mother awoke and felt that she hugged a corpse to her bosom, for her darling one had departed in the darkness. Ah! thought she, while she heard the soft breathing of her neighbour's little treasure, "How happy art thou who canst still claim a living son, while I am deprived of the pleasure of nursing my loved little one. What would I give if I were only reposing with my own in my arms as thou art! Alas! my child is dead! my heart will break! And how will I be able to bear up under the stroke, when thou sittest beside me nursing thine infant, ever bringing to mind the loss I have sustained. My babe is but newly dead, but it is dead, and I must awaken thee, O happy woman! mother of a living child, to tell of my loss." But as she looks upon that mother she again envies her wealth and her fortunate lot. And as she gazes upon her soundly asleep, while her own heart is being twisted with unutterable anguish, the thought flashes into her mind that she will exchange the dead for the living. And cautiously she does it, without the mother ever knowing it, even as death had stolen her own away. But this was strange kidnapping! She stole not to enslave but to endear. What motherly affection was hers, but what selfishness too! for she handed over to another that load of grief she herself was unable to bear. Behold her now; she is apparently reposing with her neighbour's child in her bosom, as if nothing uncom-

mon had taken place. But she slept not. She thought of the dawn—how that the morning light would reveal the truth. And that it did; for when her neighbour awoke, it was with a shriek, "O! my child is dead! What shall I do?" which she kept saying all the time; lamenting her loss. Her companion with difficulty was aroused from her seeming slumbers, and deceitfully attempted to console that disconsolate heart which she had well nigh broken. But as the weeping mother handled the child something told her that it did not feel like her own son; and she thought she recognized in the cry of her neighbour's that of her own. And daylight confirmed her well-grounded suspicions. She examined both minutely, and told her friend of her fraud, as she threw her arms around her infant in a vain endeavour to pluck it from her embrace. "That's my child," said the mother; "you have taken it from me while I was asleep, in exchange for your own. The dead child is yours." "Nay," said the other, "the living is mine." And she would not part with it. The dead belonged to one, yet both disowned it. Nobody covets death; every one likes to cling to life, as well as these two fallen sisters of humanity. And the false claimant was in earnest, for she still refused to yield up the child. The other, scarcely knowing what to do, referred the matter to Solomon's judgment. The baby-stealer agreed to go, little suspecting that Solomon was one of a thousand, who would soon sift the case, and expose her shallow claim. Seated on his throne, and crowned with wisdom, with many a judicial Israelite around him, he had them and their children brought before him. The aggrieved mother stated the wrong that had been perpetrated upon her; the other with the live infant in her arms denied the charge. Bathsheba's wise son fixed his eyes upon them both for an instant; he

thought he could tell the mother of the living child, but he had to prove it to those assembled around him, in order that the justice of his judgment might appear. Solomon, never at a loss for an expedient, said, "It seems you both claim the living and both discard the dead child; and it is evident you cannot both have the living child. Bring me a sword," he said, turning to one of his attendants. All present looked blank as the sword was produced, for no one comprehended its use on such an occasion. "Divide the living child in two," said the king, "and give each a half, for both cannot possess it." His servant lifted the sword to strike, but a shriek startled the assembled court, and before they knew what had taken place, one of the mothers had thrown herself between the weapon and the child. "O let the child live," she cried, "even although I am not allowed to call it mine." "No," cried the other, "halve it and give each her share." "Yes," replied Solomon. "each shall have her share, and she shall have the living child for it is hers, and thou shalt have the dead for it is thine."

Solomon knew human nature well, and never did he show his insight into it better than on this occasion. His subjects had cause to rejoice in their young king, and there was not a fireside from Dan to Beersheba at which the story was not told, and his wisdom admired. The mothers of Judah loved to tell it, for it was a rich display of a mother's love, no less than of a sovereign's wisdom.

X. Y. Z.

TEMPTATIONS. — Temptations make a Christian more servicable and useful to others. None so fit and able to relieve tempted souls, to sympathize with tempted souls, to succour tempted souls, to counsel tempted souls, to pity tempted souls, to bear with tempted souls, and to comfort tempted souls as those who have been in the school of temptation.—*Brooks.*

THE KING OF GLORY.

Our Lord is risen from the dead;
Our Jesus is gone up on high;
The powers of hell are captive led,—
Dragged to the portals of the sky:
There his triumphant chariot waits,
And angels chant the solemn lay;—
Lift up your heads, ye heavenly gates;
Ye everlasting doors, give way!

Loose all your bars of massy light,
And wide unfold the ethereal scene;
He claims these mansions as his right;
Receive the King of glory in!
Who is the King of glory? who?
The Lord, that all our foes o'ercame;—
The world, sin, death, and hell o'erthrew;—
And Jesus is the conqueror's name.

Lo! his triumphant chariot waits,
And angels chant the solemn lay;
Lift up your heads, ye heavenly gates;
Ye everlasting doors, give way!
Who is the King of glory? who?
The Lord, of glorious power possessed;—
The King of saints and angels too;
God over all, forever blest!

WAS IT WORTH CLIMBING FOR?

A boy at play struck the ball awkwardly, so that it fell upon the roof of a high barn. He immediately scrambled by the rugged door, and, clinging by the hole in the brickwork, reached the top of the barn, rubbing the skin from his fingers, tearing his clothes, and running the risk of breaking his neck. He gained the ball, but was it worth climbing for?

A man climbed up a greasy pole, on the top of which was stuck a hat, for any one who chose to take it. The man had great difficulty to climb up the pole, for it was greasy, so that he had to take sand from his pockets to rub upon it, that it might be less slippery. At last he reached the top; but the hat being nailed fast there, was spoiled in being torn away. The man obtained the hat; but was it worth climbing for?

The boy and the man were climbers after things of little value, compared with things which are eternal. A peasant boy may climb after a bird's nest, and a prince may climb after a kingly crown. Both the bird's nest and the crown will fade away. Well would it be for us to put to ourselves the question, concerning many an object of our arduous pursuit, **IS IT WORTH CLIMBING FOR?**—*Tract Magazine.*

✠ HOW TO STOP SINNING.

"If I could stop sinning, I would hae peace," said a Scotchwoman to me, when visiting one day.

"Stop sinning, Mrs. Y.!" said I; "what do you mean? You are not living in sin, are you? I have all along taken you for a very decent, respectable woman. What sins do you refer to?"

"Oh, don't think that I'm leevin' in sin, sir. I coul'dna dae that. I am tryin' to dae my best to give every ane their ain, and leavo quietly wi' my neebours, (and am as good as my neebours); but, oh, I hae a wicked hairt for a' that, and my conscience tells me there's an awfu want about me some way or other, for I'm feert to dee, [die,] and I'm unco [very] unhappy at times."

"You would like to be holier, I see; and you think that if you could only arrive at a certain pitch of holiness, you would enjoy happiness and peace."

"Ay, I think sae, if I could get at it; but it's no easy for a body wi' a big family to get a' done they would like. I canna get to the kirk, for instance, as often as I would like, and I whiles lose my temper among them, and thae's the kind o' things that fash me; and mony a time I say to myself, 'Whar would I gang tae, if I were ta'en awa' this way? I'm far, far frae bein' right."

The tears trickled down her cheeks as she thus spoke.

"If you could get away from your family, and all your cares and trials and temptations, with nothing to disturb your devotions; and if you could get to church as often as you liked, and to the week-night meetings, with reading the Bible, and such-like, all attended to, you think you would be happy and able to stop sinning?"

With a smile, she said, "I think I would, sir."

"Yes, if you had a little room away in a retired spot,—back from society,—with nothing but your Bible and your God, and the comforts of life,—say a nice little room, in a nice little cottage,—you think you would manage the thing?"

She smiled again, as if she saw all these desirable things I pictured out to her, and said, "Yes, sir, I am sure I would."

"Well then, Mrs. Y., suppose you had all that to-morrow, do you think you would be perfect then?"

"Maybe I wouldna be perfect, but I would be in a state that I would hae peace, I think."

"Well, granting that you would be much freer from sin than now, what would you do with the past? How do you mean to get

that settled? You are now between thirty and forty, I should say, and although you have been decent all your days, you must have been guilty of many sins—sins of youth long forgotten—sins of omission as well as commission—wrong words—wrong thoughts—wrong desires—wrong looks even—wrong motives, &c. Your life has been a life of sin, in short; when you take a right look at the thing in the light of God's Word and Holy Law. So long as a man compares himself with his neighbour, he is not very greatly alarmed, he thinks a little reformation will do; but when he brings himself alongside of God's broad and Holy Law, it is then he cries out, '*Whar must I do?*'"

"Granting, then, you could stop sinning to-morrow,—which you could not do, remember,—you have still the old account to settle. Suppose you kept a shop, and gave a little credit to working people from pay-day to pay-day, how would you look if one after another came in telling you that they were for no more credit, they meant to pay everything after this just as they got it, but that they would not pay what they were owing now? I ask, how would you look? How could you stand such treatment? If you had many customers of this sort, you would be ruined and have to shut up your shop.—you could not consent to the proposal; you would say, 'I'll give you time. I'll take so much a week; but you must in the long run pay all, or you'll bring me down. I must fail if you don't.'

"Well, how can you think of treating God in that way? You are wishing to act exactly as the supposed debtors. God is just and holy: His law must be honoured; His justice satisfied; His character and government respected. Christ's death for sinners does all this. The law needs blood; my conscience needs blood; blessed be God, there is blood shed! Peace has been made, and peace is proclaimed to sinners through the blood of the Cross. God's Word says, 'The soul that sinneth it shall die; my conscience say so too. I see the justice of the sentence, but I see Christ dying for me; that gives me the thing you want by your holiness—PEACE. 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them,' (Gal. iii. 10.) 'He that offendeth in one point is guilty of all,' (James ii. 10.) Texts like these made me tremble; but then it is written, Gal. iii. 13, 'Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.' This, Mrs. Y., is the secret of my peace, which I have now enjoyed for a long time. I get it from the Cross—from the blood—from lock-

ing altogether to Jesus—in letting *Thy reality*
be my Saviour.

'Nothing in my hands I bring;
 Simply to Thy Cross I cling;
 Naked, look to Thee for dress;
 Helpless, look to Thee for grace;
 Foul, I to the fountain fly—
 Wash me, Saviour, or I die.'

“What must I do be saved?”

'Nothing either great or small,
 Nothing, sinner, no:
 Jesus did it, did it all,
 Long, long ago.'

'Just as I am, without one plea,
 But that Thy blood was shed for me,
 And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee;
 O Lamb of God, I come!'

“These are the very sentiments of my heart. This gospel gives me *peace*, and, strange to say, this *peace* makes me holy. You want to put holiness *before* peace; I put *peace before* holiness. Justified by *faith*, we have *peace* with God, and the upshot is a *holy* life. First *peace* by looking at the blood, then *love*, then a *holy* life. ‘If ye love me, keep my commandments.’ We never can love Jesus till we *really believe* that He first loved us, and so loved us that He died for us. This gives *peace*. The *peace* produces *love*, *love* again is manifested by a *holy* self-denying life.

'A soul redeem'd demands a life of praise,
 Hence the complexion of his future days;
 Hence a denizen of holy and unspeak'd,
 And the world's hatred as its sure effect.'

COWPER.

“I never could stop sinning till I came to Christ, and neither will you. If you want *peace*, turn your eye to the blood; if you want *holiness*, keep your eye on the blood. You have hitherto been wanting to be saved, but your *idea* has been to save yourself—to get *peace* from yourself—from your own imperfect doings. No need of a Saviour for you at all; if only you had time and opportunity, and everything fitting, you would save yourself. Ah, Mrs. Y., do you not see your error? Come as you are; come now—to-day! You will get *peace* in believing, but never in *working*. For salvation is ‘to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly;’) though I grant you will get additional *peace* and comfort as you go on afterwards. Just as you find that you can command your temper, for instance, to a good turn for a bad one, and the like, you will no doubt get *peace* upon *peace* flowing into your soul like a river.

“The woman who touched the hem of Christ's garment was perfectly healed, in a sense, the moment she did so; and yet I think she would be better still by and by. She was happy as she felt within herself that she was healed of her plague; and yet she was happier

still after she confessed all before the crowd. So it will be with you, if you come to Christ; you will be healed of the plague of sin ‘there and then,’ so far as the punishment of it goes; but more gradually will you be healed, so far as its *power* goes. You will gradually get the dominion—you will be happy whenever you see through the truth about the blood—you will be happier still, as you find by and by that you can confess Christ and walk on in the way of real holiness.”

Never did I see any one listen so earnestly. Oh, how eagerly she drank in the truth; her eyes glistening meanwhile as if some rays of light were gaining entrance into her soul.

After a little more conversation of this sort, and after answering a few questions, I prayed and left.

Upon my second visit after this, she shook my hand heartily, and told me that she now had *peace* through the blood of Jesus—the *peace* which she had so long sought in vain, because altogether in the wrong way; and now she felt as if she could do anything for Christ. She had now found out the secret of living a *holy* life.

Dear reader, have you fallen in with God's plan of making men holy? You cannot grow in *holiness* unless you are rooted in *grace*. Every plant must have both *soil* and *root*. Without *both* of these there can be no life, no growth, no fruit. *HOLINESS* must have these. The *root* is “*peace with God*,” the *soil* in which that root strikes itself, and out of which it draws the vital sap, is the free *love* of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. “*Rooted in love*” is the apostle's description of a *holy* man. *Holiness* is not the offspring of terror, or suspense, or uncertainty, but of *peace*—conscious *peace*; and this *peace* must be rooted in *grace*; it must be the consequence of having ascertained, upon sure evidence, the forgiving love of God.

“The Divine order, then, is first pardon, then holiness; first *peace* with God, and then conformity to the image of that God with whom we have been brought to be at *peace*.”—*British Herald*.

CHRIST—OUR ALL IN ALL.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the ALL-IN-ALL of his redeemed. In every want He is their Friend.—In every danger He is their Defence. In weakness He is their Strength, in sorrow their Joy; in pain, their Peace; in poverty, their Provider; in sickness, their Physician; in hunger, their Bread; in trouble, their Consolation; in perplexity, their Counsellor; in the furnace, their Refiner; in the floods, their rock; in assaults, their Refuge; in accusations, their Advocate; in debt, their surety, in slavery, their Ransom; in captivity,

their Deliveror; in the day, their Sun; in the night, their Keeper; in the desert, their Shepherd. In life ho is their Hope; in death their Life; in the grave their Resurrection; in heaven, their Glory.

Let Christ, therefore, be thy ALL IN ALL, for time and for eternity. With the faithful martyr say, while living, "None but Christ." When dying, say, "None but Christ." Through all eternity say, "None but Christ." Let this triumphant name, "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS," settle every difficulty, solve every doubt, and silence every accusation. When conscience tells thee thy sins are both many and great, answer thou, "Christ's blood cleaueth from all sin."—When reminded of your ignorance, say, "Christ is my wisdom. When your ground and title to the kingdom are demanded, say, "Christ is my righteousness." When your meanness to enter within its sacred walls is challenged, say, "Christ is my sanctification." When Sin and the Law—when Death and Satan claim thee as their captive, reply to them all, "Christ is my redemption."—The Law saith, Pay thy debt. The Gospel saith, Christ hath paid it. The Law saith, Make amends for thy sins. The Gospel saith, Christ hath made it for thee. The Law saith, Thou art a sinner; despair, for thou shalt be condemned. The Gospel saith, Thy sins are forgiven thee; be of good comfort, thou shalt be saved.—*Rev. J. Stevenson.*

A Slave's view of the Subject.

I once found myself in company with a party of friends in the gallery of a small village church, listening to a discourse from a coloured minister. One illustration he used was so full of quaint simplicity, and at the same time so expressive of his meaning, that it struck me forcibly. He was showing how a sinner should accept the Gospel offer of salvation.

"Suppose," said he, "any of you wanted a coat, and should go to a white gentleman to purchase one. Well, he has one that exactly fits you and in all respects is just what you need.—You ask the price, but when told you have not enough money, and you shake your head—'No, massa; I am too poor; must go without, and turn away. But he says, 'I know you cannot pay me, and I have concluded to give it to you. Will you have it?' What would you do in that case?—would you stop to hem and haw, and say, 'Oh, he's just laughing at me; he don't mean it?' No such thing. There is not one of you who would not take the coat, and say, 'Yes, massa, and thank you, too.'

"Now, my dear friends, God's salvation is offered you as freely as that: why won't you take it as freely? You are lost, undone sinners, and feel that you need a covering from his wrath. If you could keep his holy law blameless, you might purchase it by good works; but ah! you are full of sin, and that continually. Prayers and tears are worthless. You are poor, indeed, and if this is all your dependence, I don't wonder that you are turning on in de-pair. But stop—look here! God speaks now, and offers you the perfect robe of Christ's righteousness, that will cover all your sins, and fit all your wants; and he says that you may have it without money and without price. O brethren, my dear brethren, do take God's word for it, and thankfully accept his free gift."

What impression the words had on the old man's coloured hearers, I cannot tell; but as our

party left the church, one of the ladies remarked to another, "What a strange idea that was about the coat!" "My dear friend," was the reply, "it suited my state of mind, rough and unpolished as it was, better than all Dr. ———'s elaborate and eloquent arguments this morning. I am so glad that I came here. How simple! How plain! Free grace alone! Yes, I will take God at his word,—

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling!"

—*American Paper.*

Antiquity and Perpetuity of the Sabbath.

"Remember the Sabbath-day."—Exod. xx. 8.

The Sabbath is no mere Jewish institution, beginning and ending with the Mosaic economy. It existed not only before Moses breathed, but before Adam fell. Even in Paradise it was known and loved. How venerable its antiquity!

The Sabbath was instituted while Adam stood the representative of all; and is therefore neither for the Jew exclusively, nor for the Gentile, but for man. "The Sabbath was made for man." And is there a man on earth who does not need it, or who should not prize it as a blessing unspeakable?

We have not only the Divine appointment, but the Divine example for the Sabbath: "God rested on the seventh day from all the works which He had made." And inasmuch as the work of redemption is infinitely greater than the work of creation, it was changed from the seventh day of the week to the first, to commemorate the former. But though there was a change in the order of time, there was none whatever in the proportion. It is still a seventh.

To rest bright on the Sabbath we must not only rest from labour, but rest in God. "Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."

No institution should be more prized by us than the blessed Sabbath. To despise the rest it offers is to reject the rest that remaineth to the people of God. It is emphatically the Lord's Day—the day for specially remembering the past, for improving the present, and for anticipating the future. Of all the seven, therefore, it should dear be to us the sweetest and the best. Though ancient, it is not obsolete, but to be remembered and revered now, as much as when it was first instituted.

How sweet is that promise, "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable, and shall honour Him, not doing thine own ways nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words, then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord, and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

"For thee we long and pray,
O blessed Sabbath morn;
And all the week we say,
O when wilt thou return!
"Come, come away,
Day of glad rest,
Of days the best,
Sweet Sabbath day."

SELF-DECEIT.

There is room for much self-deceit in the differences of conduct which we are inclined to allow ourselves under different circumstances. For is it not the case that men sometimes have, in a manner, two characters—one in their serious moods, another when they are at ease; one in office, in the eye of the world, in any responsible position, where their credit or dignity is at stake, another in private, in their hours of relaxation, in the enjoyment of society? In the former, the highest principles and the greatest and best objects are not only professed, but even intended with sincerity, and followed up for the moment with corresponding actions. But let the occasion pass by, and the very person seems to be changed. And yet men do not disavow their principles, nor deny their character, nor abate their claims to authority: but these considerations seem to be for awhile in abeyance, while the natural inclinations prevail. Thus the mind which seemed to be on some occasion really devoted to Christ, and labouring for his Church, may seem at another time to be the most active among those who are wholly absorbed by the interests of this world: the lips which at one time were preaching glory to God, and peace and good will to men, at another may indulge themselves in levity and sarcasm, in idle trifling, or vain display, or uncharitable censures, in the current style of conversation; they whose business it is to minister in the congregation of Christ's flock may be engrossed by amusements, the keenest and the readiest perhaps among those who make sports their business. Need I mention one inconsistency more? They who profess themselves members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the Kingdom of heaven, may be sometimes found to allow themselves deliberately in occasional acts of known sin, without intending thereby to disown their Christian profession, to renounce their Christian vow, or to forfeit their hope of the future. But this, perhaps, it may be said, can hardly be counted for self-deceit; it is too deliberate to have that excuse; it is the wilful love of sin. If there be any who would persuade themselves that they may, as it were, lay aside the Christian law of holiness, while they gratify themselves in the sins to which they are most tempted, and then return again to the Christian character, they are indeed fatally deceived. Let me earnestly warn those who are here against such a delusion. He who would be the disciple of Christ must be always, so far as human infirmity permits.

* * * * *

Every one, in attempting to judge of his progress and real condition in Christian

life, would claim a right to make his estimate of himself in his most favourable character, in his serious thoughts, his graver occupations, his most important duties and useful works: he would forget or overlook what he was in his lighter moments, when he might have to take into the account time and means wasted, hours of trifling, or vanity, or self-indulgence. But when the actions and the feelings are so different as they may be in the same person in these two different positions, the question may be asked, which is more truly *the man himself*: the man as he thinks and acts under the restraints of office, or of observation, or any other responsibility, or the man as he is when left to himself in freedom and at ease? If men would think it unfair, as they would in many cases, to have their personal qualities judged of by their official acts, without waiting to be seen in other relations of life, we may well doubt whether we shall make a true judgment of ourselves by looking at ourselves in the performance of our serious duties only: we may doubt whether indeed our true self be not that light, selfish, vain, envious being, loving the praise of men, full of the cares and intent upon the pleasures of this world, which we find ourselves when left freely to ourselves, rather than such as we seem to be when we have a character to support, full of high resolves, and looking only to the highest ends. As we know that "where the treasure is, there the heart will be also" (Matt. vi. 21), so we may infer that where the heart is, there the treasure is in reality; and consequently, if it is in the amusements, the relaxations, and the *reliefs* of life that men find their *pleasure*, rather than in the duties which are done with an effort, we cannot but fear that the former will sometimes give a truer picture of the man in his real character, and exhibit his real condition, how far he is or is not *conformed to the image of Christ*, more exactly than those things to which he would like to appeal as evidence of himself.—*Hussey*.

COUNTERFEIT MEekNESS.

I would clear true meekness from the adulteration of counterfeit: it has no connection with a certain weakness of principle, which may be glad to shelter itself under so respectable a name. It is not meekness for a man to have no character, no opinion of his own; to adopt the tone and sentiments of whatever company he may happen to be in; to take his standard of religion or morals from those around them; to be a Christian among Christians, or a man of the world among the children of this generation. It is not true meekness, to be without a firm, consistent,

settled character, which shows where it has stamped, and exhibits the title and superscription which it bears.

For example: it is not meekness to sit by, and hear religion or religious characters disparaged, without owning our own sentiments, and bearing such testimony as the occasion requires, and is consistent with sound discretion. It is by bearing such testimony that truth is propagated: it is by refusing it that errors prevail, and become inveterate. So far from this being praiseworthy, nothing is more hurtful; nor is any faculty more to be imitated, or more to be cultivated, than that of wisely maintaining truth or reproving error in our ordinary intercourse with other men. The effect often verifies the remark of Solomon, "A word spoken in good season, how good is it!" Indeed such conduct is almost sure to follow, where the heart is sincerely impressed. We find this in the behaviour of St. Paul at Athens. (Acts xvii.) He does not seem to have gone to that city with an express commission or intention to preach the gospel there, but was expecting Silas and Timotheus, whom he had commanded "to come to him with all speed. And while he waited for them his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him." And the reward of his holy boldness in a good cause, will commonly be the reward of similar conduct in similar circumstances. Though some mocked, and others put the subject aside to another time, "certain men clave unto him, and believed." So, although some will adhere to errors, however successfully exposed, and others will remain rooted in their prejudices, however unreasonable they may be shown to be, yet some will often be awakened to inquiry, which may be blessed to the welfare of the soul. Much is often gained by making it appear that we are in earnest in the cause of religion; much must be lost by letting this remain doubtful.

Neither, again, is it meekness to lose any opportunity of reproving and correcting vice. I do not speak now of the ministers of religion, whose business, of course, it is to be instant on all occasions in pointing out to a sinner the error of his ways, but I speak of all who have influence or authority over others; whether it be the authority of birth or situation, or the influence of friendship, or of superior talent and education. It was a precept in the Hebrew law, "Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour; and not suffer sin upon him." (Lev. xviii. 17.) Eh, the high-priest of Israel, offended against this precept in the worst way—he suffered his own sons to com-

mit iniquity without restraint; and thus drew down on himself the severe anger of the Lord. God said, that he would "judge his horse for ever, for the iniquity which he knew; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not." (1 Sam. iii. 18.) Similar weakness, at a time when we are called upon to speak openly and "quit ourselves like men" in the cause of God, is always hateful to him whom we profess to serve. It shows an indifference whether God is obeyed or no, which is quite inconsistent with zeal in his service; it shows a carelessness in regard to sin, which is quite inconsistent with a due sense of its awful consequences. Indeed we daily find that where these feelings are duly entertained, the heart will vent itself. It will feel as David felt, when he exclaims, "Mine eyes gush out with tears for the ungodly which forsake thy law."—(Psalm cxix. 53.) And it will show itself by firmness, like that of the penitent on the cross, who gave a lively proof of a heart touched by divine grace, when he reproved the wickedness of his companion in suffering.

One of the malefactors which were hanged railed on "our crucified Redeemer, saying, "If thou be Christ, save thyself and us."—But the other answering, rebuked him, saying, "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?" And "we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing amiss." (Luke xxiii. 41.) This was true courage—to defend the right, but weaker cause—to defend it when it seemed weakest; and it was shown in the full spirit of meekness and humility.

I have said thus much on what is not meekness, because, though meekness is not a natural virtue, silence in the cause of religion is but too natural an error, and young persons ought to be aware that it is an error, not a virtue. A Christian spirit is habitually retired and unobtrusive, while vice has not only the majority on its side, but is overbearing and domineering. But this, though it make the duty more difficult and painful, especially to some tempers, does not make it less a duty, "to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves." (Eph. v. 15.) It is impossible to say how far some of the worst and commonest vices, such as swearing, indecent conversation, and jesting upon sacred subjects, might be restrained, if all those who do not join in them, and even abhor them in their hearts, were to express their disapprobation in an open and decided manner. I might add with truth, though I dare not urge it as a motive, that such cor-

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duct is always respected even by those who are opposed by it, where it is seen to be sincere, and where the spirit of MEKNESS is preserved.—*Archbishop Sumner.*

STOP, FRIEND.

"Hear and your soul shall live."—*Isa. lv. 3.*

You have to die! You may die to-night! You may die to-morrow! Would you like to go to heaven or to hell? Heaven is glory—hell is misery. In heaven or hell you must be eternally. Are you living in sin—are you out of Christ?—then you are on the road to destruction. Oh, take warning. Poor blind sinner, you are murdering your soul; you are dead in trespasses and sins, you need to be quickened; you need a new heart and a right spirit.

Hitherto you have been living in sin, serving the devil—a bad master, and that you will find if you have to spend eternity with him. You will not get your desires gratified in hell—no pleasure there. God will rain upon you snares, fire, brimstone, and furious storms, and this shall be the portion of your cup for evermore. Oh, take warning in time, get your sins forgiven. You *must* have forgiveness or perish. Jesus will take you now, just as you are; will you take Him? You are a poor, lost sinner. Jesus came to save such as you. Oh, take Him then. Would you not like to be the son or daughter of the King of kings? Decide for Jesus now.

Hundreds are giving up sin and taking Jesus: will you not join them? Ah! it will be a happy thing to be Christ's at the resurrection morning. When the heavens are passing away with a great noise—the elements melting with fervent heat—this earth and the works therein on fire—how will you do on that day if you are out of Christ? That day will come, and as death leaves you judgment will find you. Prepare now; you may never have another chance.

Your life is not insured. Ere this day week you may be wrapped in your winding sheet, and screwed down in your coffin. Oh! prepare now. Jesus wants you: it grieves him to see you going on in sin; he wishes you to come to him, just as you are. Come with all your sins; he wants to cleanse you by his blood. If you come as you are, he will sprinkle his blood upon you, and you will become bright, and lovely, and white, and he will put the robe of his righteousness on you, and then you will be "complete in him." He is worth a thousand worlds. Your soul is precious, Christ is precious, heaven is precious: this world, what is it? It is vanity and vexation of spirit. G.

"RELIGION MAKES MEN GLOOMY."

Who told you so? 'My own heart.' But have you not read, 'The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked?' and will you believe that heart? 'My light-headed companions.' But what do they know about it? they never tasted any of its joys or sorrows, and are in utter ignorance of both. Would you ask a blind man his opinion of colours, or a deaf man his opinion of sounds, and form your judgment by their decision?

Go you to other sources for information ere you pronounce religion gloomy. Go, ask those who have felt its power, who know all the joys of sin and many of the joys of religion, and ask them if such has been its influence. Go to Solomon, the wise king of Israel, and ask him, 'Does religion make men gloomy?' He had drunk of every cup of earthly joy that wealth or influence could command. 'I gathered me,' he says, 'also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men. I was great; and whatsoever mine eyes desired, I kept not from them. I withheld not my heart from any joy.' But was he happy in consequence? 'Behold all was vanity and vexation of spirit.' But when he turned to religion, and her sweet influence came upon his mind, he exclaimed, 'Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.'

Religion makes men gloomy! Did it make Paul and Silas gloomy, as they sang praise in the dungeon? Did it make the first martyr, Stephen, gloomy, as he breathed out his soul in peace, and as they looked upon his countenance it seemed like the face of an angel?

But go higher for your answers. Let heaven and hell be appealed to. Which is the happiest place in the universe—is not heaven? Which is the most miserable place in the universe—is not hell? Which is the most religious? Heaven is the most religious; it is all religion there. Which is the most irreligious? Hell is the most irreligious; there is no religion there. Let the joys of heaven, and the agonies of hell, then, give the answer.

No! religion never makes men gloomy; but on the contrary, it has gilded the path of many a tried and afflicted soul through life, and proved the sweetest solace in the hour of death. And the more I feel its influence, and live beneath its power, the nearer I shall come to the joys of heaven, and the light and love and bliss that reign around God's throne.—*Gospel Trumpet.*

THE DANGER OF SIN.

Here is a long train of cars on a railway. They are crowded with passengers, and are flying pleasantly along at full speed. Now they come to where the track goes along near a high bank. Here some wicked person has placed a heavy log of wood across the track. The train comes thundering on. The engineer does not see the log. Presently the engine comes up against it with a tremendous crash. It is thrown off the track. It drags the train after it. One after another the cars roll down the bank. Many of them are broken to pieces. A dreadful scene of confusion follows. Ten or fifteen of the passengers are killed, and great numbers of them wounded. All this loss and misery is produced by the log that was laid across that track. Was it not a very dangerous thing to place that log there? Yes; for it threw that train of cars off the track and occasioned all that mischief.

Now, sin is dangerous in just the same way. God's commandments are the path of duty he has prepared for us to walk in—the track on which he would have us run. But sin, like the log against which the engine ran, throws us off the track of duty, and causes great harm. Look at Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. They were like the first two in a long train of cars. When Satan enticed them to sin, he laid a log on their track. When they consented to sin they ran against that log. This threw them off the track, and every car in the long, long train that came after them. All the war, and misery, and suffering, and death, which has filled the world since then, have been the effect of throwing that train off the track. Jesus has been occupied nearly 6,000 years in trying to get that train on the track again. It is not on yet, but he is sure to get it on at last. This shows us what a dangerous thing it is to consent to sin.

Not long ago some workmen were engaged in building a large brick tower, which was to be carried up very high. The master builder was very particular in charging the masons to lay every brick with the greatest care, especially in the first courses, or rows, which had to bear the weight of all the rest of the building. However, one of the workmen did not mind what had been told him. In laying

a corner he very carelessly left one of the bricks a little crooked, out of the line; or, as the masons call it, "not plumb." Well, you may say, "It was only one single brick in a great pile of them. What difference does it make if that was not exactly straight?" You will see directly. The work went on. Nobody noticed that there was one brick wrong. But as each new course of bricks was kept in a line with those already laid, the tower was not put up exactly straight, and the higher they built it the more insecure it became. One day, when the tower had been carried up about fifty feet, a tremendous crash was heard. The building had fallen to the ground, burying the workmen in the ruins. All the previous work was lost, the materials were wasted; and worse than this,—valuable lives were sacrificed,—and all because one brick had been laid wrong at the start.

ONWARD.

When the Apostle tells of his faith in the Son of God, who had loved him and given himself for him, he is letting us into the grand secret of his life. He moved onward under the constraining power of a love that had redeemed him from this present evil world. Hence he forgot the things that were behind, and pressed forward with an eye fixed on meeting the Lord in glory. Why should we not follow in the same track? To rest in the things of this world, is to sit down in Satan's enchanted bowers. Jesus found no resting-place on earth. Let us, then, not loiter on the race. "Onward" is the word. Let us be in earnest as we never were before. Our time here is very short: let us not lose it in looking back. Time enough for that hereafter. In such an high, and holy, and heavenly calling as ours, how diligent should we be! We live in peculiar days, when Jesus is much dishonoured by his own people, because they are neither hot nor cold. We are not afraid of being thorough Christians. The Church needs pressure to arouse it. She needs a great tug to shake her out of the lap of the world. Let us be true to our calling; making the Lord's service our delight; as in the days of Ezra, building the walls of Zion with one hand, whilst holding a weapon in the other.—*Hewitson.*

HOW MR. STRINGENT BECAME LIBERAL.

BY REV. JOHN TODD, D.D.

The spendthrift and the miser are both covetous. The difference is, that the former covets that he may spend quickly, and the latter that he may hoard and never spend. The one wishes to be thought rich; the other to conceal his property, and to be thought poorer than he is. It is easy for the one to part with his property, and to give away requires no sacrifice; it is hard for the other to use enough of his gains to make himself comfortable. Both traits increase with years, and it is very seldom that any one is ever known to pass from one extreme to the other.—Religious principle sometimes comes in and makes the spendthrift become careful, and it sometimes even opens the hand of the covetous, so that he becomes comparatively liberal.

Mr. Stringent was now over sixty years old—very old, I should have called, when I was a child. He was “brought up” in the thrifty, yet economical New England way. His father was a small, snug farmer: but as his wants were but few, he was called “well to do in the world,” which, I suppose, means, “well to do for this world.” His children received a fair education in the red school house on Parker’s Hill, and were always among the best scholars. No better cows, and no better sheep, were owned in those parts, than those owned by old Mr. Stringent. His maxim was “to keep what you have got, and get all that you can get.” This maxim he inculcated most faithfully into the minds of his children. In process of time old Stringent died, and, fortunately, such men carry nothing with them. The children grew up, and were scattered abroad, and I have nothing to say about them, except that they were all keen to gain this world. I am to speak of the youngest son, Simon, who took “the old place,” *i.e.*, the farm, agreeing to pay off his brothers and sisters their shares as fast as he could earn it.

And now Simon, in his youth, was married and settled at “Graigge’s Valley,” as the farm was called. He had to support himself and young family, and yearly pay

a good round sum towards his debt.—Early and late he toiled. Carefully and anxiously he saved everything possible.—His expenses were the lowest possible; everything went to “the debt.” And if there was anything which Simon dreaded more than another, it was a call for charity, or as he termed it, “the everlasting contribution box;” the announcement that “a collection would be taken up next Sabbath,” would invariably make him unwell and unable to attend church. Indeed, so delicate was his constitution that once in a while, when he had been caught, he was sure to have the nose-bleed, and to be compelled to go out before the box could get to him. But years passed on, and his habits grew strong, and his debts grew feeble, until at the end of fifteen years he had paid off every debt, and owned a twenty-thousand dollar farm, free from every incumbrance.

But now a new chapter in his life was to be experienced. There was an outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the people. Very many sang the new song. Very many rejoiced in the new hope of life eternal. Several of the children of Simon were among the newborn children of light. Simon was the last to become interested. He was the last to feel his sins; and he struggled and resisted a long, long time before he yielded to the demands and conditions of Christ. Then he was very slow to take up the crosses, as they lay in his path. He was afraid to commit himself. He was slow to erect the altar of prayer in his house. He was slow to confess Christ before the world. But he battled all these difficulties and overcame them, because he really had Christian principle in his soul. But now he met a difficulty which seemed insurmountable—unexpected, and very trying. He found that now his brethren, and his Bible, took it for granted that he would be liberal.—How could he, who had never given away a dollar a year, be expected to give tens and even hundreds? How hard to understand the christian fact—that “none of us liveth to himself!” He tried to convince himself that a man’s first duty is to provide for his own family; and conscience told him that he had been doing nothing else all his life. He tried to satisfy

himself that "charity beginneth home," and conscience told him that he wanted it to stop there also. When he read his Bible, it seemed as if he was always stumbling upon such texts as "Freely ye have received; freely give." One day he sat a long time motionless, trying to convince himself that he had not received much. "Why, what little I have, I earned myself by hard labor. Pray what have I received?" and then conscience would begin her whispers: "Why, Simon Stringent, you received a good constitution—you were never sick a day in all your life!"

"That's true."

"And you received a shrewd mind; you know how to manage and make money. And you have received a great deal of sunshine, and a great many rains on your farm, and a great increase of your cattle and flocks, and you have received a large, healthy family, no deaths in it, and you have received many years of life already, and hope for more, and you have received the Sabbath and its blessings; and you have as you hope, received the pardon of your sins, and a hope of life eternal through God's own Son! Received! Why, you have received everything, it has been nothing but receiving and now you *must* freely give!"

O Simon! how hard you breathe! How the perspiration stood on your brow! Had he been dreaming, or had the Spirit of God been teaching him.

The very next day Simon, or, as he was now called, Mr. Stringent, heard a loud and tender appeal from Burmah, the field on which the zealous Judson had so long labored and endured. And now a collection was to be taken up—not in the church, where every man could dodge, or conceal his parsimony, but by an open subscription, black and white. The collector was to come round at once. Then it was that the dialogue, which is said to have taken place between Mr. Stringent and the devil, occurred.

"How much *must* I give?" said Stringent.

"As little as you can and be respectable," said the devil.

"I am very far from being rich," said Stringent.

"You are the richest man in the church," said conscience.

"Support Lights, \$20 dollars."

"Fool enough," said the temptor.

"Freely ye have received, freely give," said conscience.

"Remember your great family, their schooling, and clothing, and the new furniture, and the new carriage which you need," said the temptor.

"I shall put down ten dollars," said Stringent.

"You are beside yourself. Why, they will expect you to do in like proportion for everything hereafter. There's no end to these calls," said the temptor.

"I shall put down twenty dollars," said Stringent.

"Yes, but do consider," said the temptor; "you know your taxes are awful this year—and you know your oats are very light, and they sell by weight and not by the bushel, as they once did, and the drought has injured your grass, and your fruit will be next to nothing."

"Yes," said conscience, "but your corn is magnificent, and so are your potatoes, and if hay is light, the price is certainly heavy, and your workmen never earned as much as they do this year, and the ship-timber which has been growing long before you were born, had brought an enormous price."

"I shall put down fifty dollars!"

"O Mr. Stringent! Mr. Stringent! you are nearly crazy—to throw away money so! Why sir, with that sum you could buy two young cows, or ten first-rate—"

"Get out—get out, you tempter of my soul! I shall put down one hundred dollars, this time, and if you don't let me alone, I declare I will double it!"

And Mr. Stringent did put it down, and he felt so much better and grew so strong under it, that it was well understood between him and the devil, ever after, that if he was tempted he would double his charities. And so well did he abide by it, that he became one of the most liberal men in the community. And when he went round to collect for charities, as he often did, the most liberal man always being the best collector, and when his brethren would make excuses, he would shake his head and say, "I only wish you could have such dialogues with the devil as I have had!"—*Examiner.*

THE WORSHIP OF GOD.

BY REV. THEO. L. PUTLER.

The Christian religion is a system of faith and doctrine. It is a rule of life and practice. But it is also a *worship*. It has its appointed day, and its sacred places, for public adoration and homage to Almighty God.

I. Now there are a few practical mistakes made by multitudes of people when they enter the sanctuary. The first mistake is that of coming to church, not to meet God, but to meet their pastor, some favorite preacher. The foremost inquiry of their minds is not, "is God in this place?" but, is my favorite preacher in the pulpit? They come solely to see him, to hear him, to enjoy him, perhaps, too, to be instructed and enriched by his utterances. Therefore, the preliminary service of prayer, and reading the Word, and singing to God's praise is a mere "first course," to sharpen the appetites for the literary banquet of the sermon. It would suit such persons equally well, if all sets of pure *devotion* were dispensed with, and, as in a lyceum lecture-hall, the discourse came at once, and came alone. Far be it from us to disparage the power of a faithful pulpit in expounding the revealed truth of God, and in guiding souls to holiness and to heaven. But no possible instruction from the pulpit—were Paul or Apollos the preacher—can make up for the lack of worship, and the man who never lifts his thoughts higher than the pulpit and its utterances may indeed engage in worship, but it is the worship of his minister, and not of his divine Creator.

II. A second mistake, and a far worse one, is made by those who go to church for mere self-indulgence and entertainment. They go to be gratified. They enjoy the musical performance, if it is of unquestionable artistic excellence; Jenny Lind or Karl Fornes would be better still. They will enjoy the discourse, too, if it is brilliant, or pathetic, or gracefully pronounced. They while away a leisure hour of their dull Sabbath in good company, and they "are appearances." When the idle hour is over, they can tell you what improvements might have been made in the Organist's gestures, or in the execution of the "voluntary" on the organ, or in the

dress of their neighbors in the adjoining pews. But what of HIM who has said; "My house shall be called a house of prayer?" What thought have they had of an infinite owner of that house and of that service; what thought of their own immortal souls? Sure enough, they were so busy in worshipping themselves that they quite forgot to worship Him whom all heaven delights to adore.

III. There is a third mistake, or sin we had better name it. It is the sin of him who brings all the work of the week and all his plans for business into the house of God. How much better is such an one than those sacrilegious hucksters and brokers who once set up their bird-stalls and exchange-tables in Jerusalem's sacred temple? For this man brings his counting-room or his shop to church in his heart. He makes bargains or computes the rise in gold during the prayer, sells stocks or buys produce all through the sermon, and goes home with new plans for the Monday's toil and traffic. "You are the first minister," said a friend once to his pastor, "who ever has preached me out of my flour-store." We honored the frankness of his confession; but are there not hundreds of human *bodies* in our churches on every Sabbath, whose *souls* are in flour-stores or brokers' offices, or warehouses, or in barns and harvest-fields? Whom do these worship, God or Mammon? Jesus Christ tells them that they cannot worship both at the same time.

IV. There is a fourth mistake—and a terrible one for an undying soul. It is the mistake of those who never "darken the door" of the sanctuary; who fear no God and remember no eternity; who make the desecrated Sabbath a day of mirth and indolence, or open ungodliness. Alas for such moral suicides, such murderers of their own souls! If one man goes to the sanctuary to worship the pulpit, and another goes to worship his own pleasure and another goes to worship Mammon, whom do these stay away from the temple to worship, but the devil?

None of these classes are making their Sabbaths the preparation-seasons for the sublime and ceaseless worship of the celestial temple. In that sanctuary of holy and happy spirits there shall be no triflers,

no wandering hearts or silent lips. Every heart shall have its tribute of homage, every tongue its song of praise. They shall worship God day and night in his temple. A voice like the sound of many waters shall proclaim, "Fear God, and give glory to him, and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea and fountains of waters!" And the whole glorified host shall cry aloud responsively, "All honor and praise and thanksgiving and power unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb!" That is the Sabbath that never ends. That is the worship of the King of kings. That house is no more a "house of prayer," but a house of praise. May you and I be there!

APELLES.

Who has not heard of the fame of the painter, who was so approved by Alexander the Great, that all other artists were forbidden to draw the monarch's portrait? Apelles! His name is a proverb for celebrity. More than twenty centuries have done honour to his pencil; and our own age unites in the tribute, though all the works of his genius have long since perished.

But where is the fame of the Apelles of the Bible? Who remembers *him*? Yet we have as much to remind us of him as of his Grecian namesake; that is, we have in either case, only the testimony of former days. We have the mental character of the one, and the spiritual character of the other. The painter was approved of Alexander; the believer was "approved in Christ." The prominent mark of the first was his skill—of the other, his faith.

Both were judged according to their works, by the masters to whom they respectively laboured to approve themselves. Alexander looked for accuracy of eye and hand—exactness of imitation—brilliance of invention. He found these in his Apelles, and accepted him. The painter was also a devoted subject to the king. He was loyal, submissive, watchful of his will, as the eyes of a servant to the hand of a master. The monarch favoured and rewarded him, as he witnessed these marks of his faithfulness.

The Christian Apelles had, in like manner, by his devotion and zeal, his patience and obedience, manifested true attachment

to his Lord. He was a proved, a true disciple. Paul was a witness to this, and therefore saluted him among the helpers in Christ Jesus, the beloved in the Lord, and those who laboured much in the Lord. He was seen to be one of those of whom the apostle says, that they who serve Christ in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, are acceptable to God, and approved of men; one of these approved ones who are made manifest by their adherence to the truth when divisions and heresias abound; who are approved, not by commending themselves, but by having the marks of those whom the Lord commandeth; and who, by proving themselves in examining their faith, show by their holiness, that Christ is in them, and that they are not reprobates.

Let an impartial world decide who is the great Apelles, and of whom it is best to be approved.—*Gospel Trumpet.*

CHASTISEMENT.

I have been dumb, and held my peace,
Because the stroke was Thine:
When Thou dost bare Thy holy arm,
Omnipotent, divine,
Shall mortal man, corrupt within,
Complain that Thou dost visit sin?

Thou didst it, Lord. This sorrow came,
Obedient to Thy will:
Thy hands have made me; oh! in wrath
Remember me, my still
I will be silent at Thy awful throne;
Lord, Thou hast fashioned me: Thy will be done.

Thou didst it: Thou whose heart of love
Was wounded first for me;
Who passed through mortal life, and bore
Death's deepest agony:
How can I murmur or complain,
When Jesus suffered grief and pain?

Thou didst it; who art watching now
Each pang and heavy sigh:
Yes, I submit if only Thou
Wilt hold me, and stand nigh.
I will not struggle with the knife
That wounds me but to save my life.

Thou didst it, who art gone on high,
Where many mansions be,
There to prepare a glorious home
And deathless friends for me.
Shall I rebel against the love
That fits me for my home above?

Ah, no! e'en through this load of fears
My heart is springing up,
To thank Thee for the boundless grace
That overflows my cup.
But I am weak, and cannot always say
'Thy will be done!' Remember I am clay.

Put a new song within my lips,
And let my spirit sing;
I give Thee up my inmost heart,
Saviour, and Priest, and King.
Take to Thee there at least Thy power and reign,
Henceforth 'to live is Christ, to die is gain.

Sabbath School Lessons.

October 30th, 1864.

THE MARRIAGE OF THE KING'S SON.—Matt. xxii. 1-14.

THE DESIGN OF THE PARABLE.

This parable evidently refers to the rejection of the Jews and to the calling of the Gentiles. The Gospel, with all its privileges, was offered to the Jewish people; but through their wickedness and pride they rejected it, and all its blessings were offered to the Gentiles and accepted.

This is the general truth intended to be conveyed, though there are many circumstances thrown in to fill out the narrative which it is difficult to explain.

In this parable the king represents God providing for the salvation of the world. The marriage, or rather marriage feast, is held on occasion of the marriage of his son. Christ is the bridegroom. The Church is the bride; Rev. xxi. 9. The Gospel day is the day of its espousal. The Gospel covenant is a marriage covenant betwixt Christ and believers.

THE INVITATION TO THE JEWS.

Messengers were sent to call them that were bidden, ver. 3. There were two invitations—one at a considerable distance before the time, that they might have opportunity to prepare for it; and the other to give notice of the precise time when they were expected. Though servants were sent to urge the invitation upon them, they manifested a determination not to come. They would not come after the first invitation. When further pressed they made light of it. They thought it more importance to attend to their farms and their merchandise than to be saved by the Gospel.

They added cruelty to neglect—ill-treating the messengers, and even putting them to death; for which the Lord rejected them. He scattered His armies, which were the Romans, and destroyed their city, which was Jerusalem.

THE INVITATION TO THE GENTILES.

The Gentiles were commonly regarded by the Jews as living in highways and hedges, cast out, poor, and despised. To these an invitation was sent. All classes were

gathered in, and the feast was sufficiently supplied with guests.

THE LAZARUS.

When the king came in to see the guests, he found one not having on the wedding garment. "The garments worn on festival occasions were chiefly long white robes; and it was the custom of the person who made the feast to prepare such robes to be worn by the guests. This renders the conduct of this man more inexcusable. He came in his common, ordinary dress, as he was taken from the highway; though he had not a garment of his own suitable for the occasion, yet one had been provided for him, if he had applied for it. His not doing it was expressive of the highest disrespect for the king. This beautifully represents the conduct of the hypocrite in the Church. A garment of salvation might be his, wrought by the hand of the Saviour, and dyed in His blood. But the hypocrite chooses the filthy rags of his own righteousness, and thus offers the highest contempt for that provided in the Gospel." When the man was spoken to about it he was speechless. He had no excuse.

He was cast into outer darkness, to endure everlasting punishment; ver. 13.

Observe—1. Many who are invited to be saved reject the Gospel, and perish in their sins. If they perish they only will be to blame.

2. The cares of this world will shut many out of the kingdom of heaven. Some attention to these things is necessary, but such as leads to the loss of the soul never can be right.

3. Many of the poor and needy will be saved, while the haughty and rich will perish for ever.

4. A profession of religion will not save us; ver. 11-13. It is foolish to deceive ourselves.

November 6th, 1864.

SAUL SEEKS HIS FATHER'S ASSES.

1 Samuel ix. 1-27.

From the days of Joshua, the twelve tribes had no recognised civil ruler, they were desirous of having a king; and this chapter narrates the first step by which God made Saul their sovereign.

Ver. 1-5. From which of Jacob's sons was Kish descended? Kish seems to have been a brave rather than a rich man, ver. 1 with ver. 21, and 1 Sam. x. 27. Asses were

much finer animals in the East than in this country: they were more prized, as horses were forbidden to be multiplied, Deut. xvii. 16; Isa. ii. 7: and large herds of asses were kept, Gen. xii. 16. Observe *Saul's diligence*: he did his very best, and searched far and near to find them. Whether working or learning let us do it with our might, Eccles. ix. 10; heartily a to the Lord, Col. iii. 23. Newton says, a cobbler, if a Christian, should be the best in the parish. Observe what a *good son* Saul was, ver. 5; this was *honouring* his father; a wise son maketh a glad father, Prov. xv. 20.

Ver. 6-10. The name of this city is not known. A man of God is a common name for a prophet, Josh. xiv. 6; honourable, means much honoured or famous. He was the greatest since Moses; revelations were made to him when but a child. 1 Sam. iii. 10; 19 to 21. Presents were usually brought on visiting a superior; a shekel is worth half-a-crown. The servant was wrong if he thought prophets could be bribed to tell the future, ver. 8; see 1 Kin. xiv. 3; 2 Kin. v. 16. God only, and His prophets whom he instructs, can foretell: therefore fortune-tellers are cheats. But the servant's advice was good. God's people had the privilege then of asking His direction, 1 Sam. xxiii. 24. We have now two means of obtaining the guidance of God: The Scriptures, Psal. xix. 11;—Prayer, Jas. i. 5. It shows how little we know the worth of the soul, if we pray to God in sickness for health, or in poverty for subsistence, and neglect to pray for pardon and a change of heart; this ought to be first. His young master was not too proud to take his servant's advice; the servant was respectful, the master kind.

Ver. 11-14. How politely these maidens speak; let your speech be with grace, Col. iv. 6. This was a great feast such as that of the new moon; Samuel prayed for a blessing on it. We can ask, but God only gives. Psal. xx. 1-4. How do you know this was not a Sabbath-day? ver. 11, and Fourth Commandment.

Ver. 15-17. God's omniscience; the very hour is mentioned, His eyes are in every place, Prov. xv. 3. How He makes different events work together for good; the loss of the asses brought Saul to Samuel. His compassion; He will regard the prayer of the destitute, Psal. cii. 17. Since God knows all, what a comfort to those who love Him; how awful for those who live in sin, Jer. xvii. 10. Do not be afraid to cry to God in distress.

Ver. 18-24. How Saul must have wondered at the seer's knowledge. There was no need for the present the servant had. The high place was where the sacrifice was offered. Observe Saul's humility; he is not elated at

being bidden to eat with the great king of Israel. Samuel says, *the desire of Israel* on thee; Saul must have had some guess the meaning of this, 1 Sam. viii. 4; but he scarcely believes one so unknown should be promoted to the throne. God exalts the humble. The Benjamites had been destroyed by the other tribes for their sin, xx. 48. Observe how free Samuel was of *jealousy*. He was then chief ruler, yet has no envy of this stranger who is to be placed above him as king. A sound life is the life of the flesh, but envy the tenness of the bones, Prov. xiv. 20. One envieth not. Observe how he gives honour to whom honour was due. The elders would have their expectations of Saul raised by the reception of him.

Ver. 25-27. The tops of the houses flat, Deut. xxii. 8, and adapted to secret conversation. Samuel's conversation was about the kingdom, and how he ought to govern the fear of God. How different Samuel's answer from what Saul expected; he came to inquire about his father's asses, and he heard of a kingdom. God's ways are not as our ways. The intimation was kept secret till the right moment arrived: Saul only knew it. We may suppose he slept little that night, and was ready to meet Samuel at spring of the day. But late or early, God's word is always in season. Hear it, Deut. 6-9; it will lead you to a crown of glory, 1 Tim. iv. 8; a throne, Rev. iii. 21; and a kingdom, 1 Pet. i. 4.—*Edin. S. S. Lessons.*

THE CHRISTIAN'S FRIEND.

There is a Friend that sticketh closer than thyself,
Who gave the new commandment, saying, "I love one another."

This Friend is beloved Jesus; come let us go to
And He will freely pardon us, and wash our feet
from sin.

Carry all your burdens to Him and He will give
rest
Let it be no outward burden, but that weight
of your breast.

Call on thy God for mercy and present Him all
sin,
He will give you another nature and change
heart within.

He will clothe you with His righteous robes
throw your rags away,
So then you will not be naked at the great appointed day;
Then you must fight the warfare, wear the armour
and be strong;
It's a thorny path to heaven but the journey is long.

Hold the Saviour precious as the Pearl of
price.
Be clothed with humility, the flower of Paradise
Your mind that was once on earth will be the
wards your God,
You'll be looking to the King of kings, He'll
you with his rod.