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THE RIVER AND THE SEA.

BY THE REV. J. BRODIE, MONTMAIL, SCOTLAND.

“Oh that thou hadst hearkened to My commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.”—ISAIAH XLVIII. 18.

In these words the Redeemer mourns over the perversity of His people, and contrasts the wretched and hopeless condition into which their rebellion had brought them, with the glorious position to which, through His grace, they had been called. The peace promised to his believer—that is, the joy and satisfaction which spring up within him when he receives and rests on the saviour—is compared to a river, His righteousness—that is, his title in the eye of the law to pardon and to acceptance—is likened to the waves of the sea. His peace is the present revenue which his inheritance affords, and no amount of earthly joy can equal its value; his righteousness is the tenure by which this inheritance is held, and no title is so secure as the covenanted promise of God.—These are the elements which confer preciousness on the portion which the Lord bestows on his people; and the similitude employed in our text affords an appropriate illustration, both of their nature, and of the connection that subsists between them.

1. THE PEACE OF THE BELIEVER IS LIKE A RIVER.—Of all the objects that in any landscape can meet the eye, the river is one of the most interesting and beautiful. In whatever aspect it may appear,—whether tossing and foaming among the rocks of the mountain gorge, or smoothly gliding along in the level plain; whether winding through the open field and glittering in the sun, or flowing through the shade of the forest and covered with gloom—the river attracts and delights the observant eye. This is the case even in the well-watered lands of our colder climes. In the sunny regions of the south, where the drought of summer is more severely felt, the beauty of the river is still more readily confessed. The beauty is more especially remarkable when it comes into contrast with the desert plain. It not unfrequently happens that the traveller, after passing through many a weary mile of

burning waste, comes all at once in sight of the valley in which a noble stream is rolling along. A scene of beauty bursts on his view. He sees a smiling plain, stretched out before him, in which meadow and grove alternate with the cultivated field; and herb, and tree, and living thing seem to flourish as in another Eden.—The track over which he has passed is desolate, as if swept with the besom of destruction; the country before him seems bright and fair, as if the blight of sin had never passed over it.—Such is the peace of the believer, and such are the joys of those that keep the commandments of the Lord. And striking as is the contrast between the well-watered banks of the stream and the barren desert beyond them, equally striking is the contrast between the condition of him who walks in “wisdom’s ways,” and the deadness and hopelessness of those who “know not God.”

The sources of the river are many and various—If we trace the river from its mouth, where it pours its treasures into the deep, up to its feeble beginning in the mountain, we find it drawing its supply from a multitude of tributaries, of varied size and course. On one hand, we see a torrent rushing impetuously down the hill; on another, a sluggish brook creeping through the marsh; here a powerful stream bringing down a swelling flood; and there, a little rill, supplying its tiny store. All of them, however, whether great or small, increase the river’s tide. Such is the experience of the believer. At one time a gushing joy fills his bosom, and he feels as if, like the apostle he were caught up to the third heaven; at another, a scanty drop of consolation sustains him in his hour of need; now, he is cheered by the truths that are taught in the mount of ordinances; and again, he is comforted by the lessons imparted in the valley of affliction. Many and manifold are the channels through which the heavenly gift is

conveyed; and all of them to the increase of his bliss.

When we further direct our attention to the treasury from which the tribute paid to the stream is originally derived, we find that the primary source of the whole is rain and snow that comes from heaven. If the shower were to be withheld, the stream would cease, and its channel soon be dry. Thus also it is with the spiritual peace of the saint. Additions are brought to it through many a varied channel; but all of them originate in the marvellous goodness of the Lord. His word, His ordinances, and the workings of His providence, contribute in their turn to the blessedness; in its commencement, and in all its increase, it is the free gift of His infinite love.

The course of the river is very varied— The course of the stream is never straight. It is continually turning, sometimes to the right hand, and sometimes to the left.— Its current also perpetually varies. At one place it foams and tosses over a barrier of rocks, at another it winds its sluggish way through the reedy pool. At one time it passes through the open plain, at another it is hemmed in by the mountain, or hidden by the forest. But whatever the direction in which it runs, whatever the scenes through which it passes, these outward circumstances do not affect its strength. It still flows on, and, in almost every case, as its course is lengthened, its channel is deepened, and its volume is enlarged. Thus, also, it is with the Christian's inward peace. Its course is never straight. It meets with many an interruption, and witnesses many a change; but whether the sunshine of onward prosperity beam on it, or the gloom of adversity envelope it, these outward circumstances have but little effect. It still flows on. The comforts and honors of time do not affect the joy within. Even spiritual privileges, valuable as they are, must not be relied on. As the river's strength does not depend on the scenery that surrounds it, but on the supplies of moisture that descend from above; so the Christian's peace does not proceed from the influence of external circumstances, but from the outpouring of the Spirit of grace.

We further remarked that the river, in

almost every case, increases in size as it proceeds on its course. A similar progress characterizes the comfort and hope of the Christian, when he keeps the commandments of his God. The river, issuing from its mountain source, rushes on in impetuous career, and its voice is heard afar; but when its augmented stream glides through the valley below, its current is smooth, and it utters no sound. When the shallow brook is diminished by the summer's drought, it murmurs in its stony bed; but when the melting snow has filled it from bank to bank, it sweeps swiftly yet silently along. In like manner, the joy of the young believer may be more demonstrative than that of the aged saint; but the feeling is not so deep. As the Christian advances in his path to heaven, his inward blessedness increases in strength and uniformity of progress, though its outward expression may be less.

*The effects produced by the river are profitable and pleasing.—*The herbage that clothes the watered meadow is fresh and green; trees that fringe the margin of the brook are rich in foliage and luxuriant in growth. Every one confesses the remarkable beauty of the Psalmist's similitude, when he compares the upright man to a "tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in her season; and his leaf also shall not wither." When water is supplied, more especially in the sunny climes of the south, herb, and plant and fruit-bearing tree appear in their glossy vigour; but when moisture is denied, they wither and die. The animal creation, in like manner, rejoices in the presence of the stream. In it the bird and the beast allay their thirst; and man employs it, in many a varied appliance, for his comfort and health.—In all this we have an appropriate illustration of the beneficial effects that flow from peace in believing.— When there is joy within, devotion to God, gratitude to the Redeemer, and love to our fellow-men, every grace that can adorn the Christian character, will flourish and grow; and the larger the measure of our peace, the more beneficial will its influence be. Those around us will also partake of the benefit. When the Christian rejoices in the assurance of God's love, the desponding are encouraged by his example, the hopeful are strengthened in their

hope, and even the careless are led to desire a share in the blessing.

This diffusion of the benefit, which he himself receives, tends to increase the believer's joy. When the herb and tree drink up the water of the stream, we might at first suppose that this would tend to lessen its flow; but the effect produced is directly the reverse. The rush and flag that cover the rill, and the foliage that shades the river, protect them from the influence of the drying wind and scorching sun, and thus afford a rich return for the sustenance they receive. When the colonist settles in a country covered with wood, he very frequently finds water on every side; but when his hatchet has cleared fields, and the yellow corn waves where the forest grew, the brook that was sufficient to turn the miller's wheel does little more than supply the wants of the farm. The stream that meanders through verdure, proceeds with undiminished flow; while that which runs through the leafless desert, evaporates and wastes away. The experience of the people of God is precisely similar. It is when watering others that we ourselves are refreshed. If therefore, we desire that our peace may be as a river, ever flowing, and ever deepning as it flows, we must not only seek to be abundantly supplied with the blessing from above, we must at the same time endeavor to promote the spiritual welfare of those around us and be like our great example, continually doing good,

II. THE BELIEVER'S RIGHTEOUSNESS IS COMPARED TO THE WAVES OF THE SEA.—By the righteousness of the believer we sometimes understand the merit of the Redeemer's sacrifice and service, that is, the righteousness of Christ imputed to His people, which forms their title to pardon and acceptance; and sometimes we regard it as referring to that holiness of heart, and integrity of life, which are imparted to them by the operation of the Spirit. It is evident that, in the verse before us, the expression can only refer to the merits of the Redeemer imputed to the believer. That righteousness is infinite in measure and in value, and may fitly be compared to the unfathomable deep. But the highest attainments in personal holiness to which the Christian, ever can reach, are as nothing;

and, instead of being compared to the sea, should rather be likened to the pool that is formed by the passing shower. It is limited in its extent, it is shallow, and defiled.

The sea is vast and deep—When we stand on the shore of the ocean, and stretch our eye over its wide expanse; when we take ship, and voyage onward, for days and weeks, and months, with nothing but water all around; when we think of the ocean spreading north, and south, and east and west, compassing the globe; the imagination feels oppressed with the thought of its vast extent. When we calculate its depth, and find that it is not to be measured by feet, or by fathoms, but by miles, the full amount of its watery mass fills the mind with awe. It may be set down in figures, but it cannot be imagined in thought.—Even such is the righteousness of the saints. The value of the Saviour's sufferings, as a satisfaction for their guilt, the value of His obedience, as their title to reward, like the mighty mass of the ocean, surpass our power of comprehension.

Vain, moreover, would be any attempt to calculate the amount. Their peace is like the river. It has a limit; the eye can range from bank to bank. Its deepest reach can easily be fathomed; for it is proportioned to the capacity of the soul that it fills. Their righteousness is, like the ocean, vast, incomprehensible; for it is proportioned to the value set by the Eternal Father on the sacrifice and service of His son. The blessing which they actually possess has a measure, but their title to blessing has none. Their capacity of enjoyment is like the river, it lies within narrow bounds; but the Saviour's merit, which constitutes their right and claim, is like the sea. It is an ocean,—an ocean immeasurable,—without a bottom, and without a shore.

The sea is terrible to all that opposes it—The fearful power of the angry deep when its waves have been roused into fury, and billow after billow comes rolling in, impresses the beholder with dread.—The stately ship—the labor of many hands for many months, its timbers of the strongest oak, its bolts of brass and iron, when sailing before a prosperous breeze, seems like a giant going forth to the bat-

tle, proudly defiant of every foe; but if it strike on the sandbank or rock, and there be exposed to the force of the wave, its strongest fastenings are snapped asunder, and its timbers are strewed in confusion on the shore. Even the rocky bulwark, which the Creator's hand has raised to slay the advancing tide, shows in its water-worn caverns, the power of the surge.—More terrible by far, however, than the great 'sea billows,' is the righteous vengeance of the Lord toward those who despise and oppress His people. 'Touch not Mine anointed,' saith the Lord, 'do My prophets no harm.' They go forth as 'lambs in the midst of wolves;' but their Avenger is enthroned above, and 'he that toucheth them toucheth the apple of His eye.'—Let the persecutors of the saints beware; those who lay snares for the souls of the simple beware. Vengeance now may sleep, all may be still and peaceful as the glassy surface of the sea in the calm of a summer's eve; but when it is roused into fury, who or where is he that may stand before the wrath of the Lamb?

The sea is an effectual protection to all that it covers.—The surface of the ocean, white with foaming breakers, an object of fear and dread to all who are exposed to its shock, is an appropriate emblem of the terrible anger of the Lord.—Even in the time of the storm, however, if we could dive down into its depths, we should find that there all was calm. While the surface-water of the sea, impelled by the hurricane, is dealing destruction on all that comes within its reach, a few fathoms underneath the sea-weed expands its tender fronds, the zoophyte stretches out its branch and its filmy arms, and shells of the most fragile kind are spread around, and receive no harm. If they are cast upon the shore, they are instantly broken; but while covered with the deep, they fear no evil. Such is the protection which the imputed righteousness of Jesus supplies to those who put their trust in him. The day of vengeance may arise, and the wrath of an angry God may be roused; His enemies may flee before Him, and, in blindfold terror, may call on the rocks and mountains to fall on them and hide them from His fury; but His people rest secure. The storm may rage; but its force passes over them. 'Who shall lay anything to

the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.' 'If God be for us who can be against us?'

III. THE CONNECTION THAT SUBSISTS BETWEEN THE PEACE AND THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE BELIEVER, IS LIKE THAT WHICH IS FOUND BETWEEN THE RIVER AND THE SEA.

All the water that flows in rill or river comes from the ocean.—It is the action of the sun, shining on the surface of the deep, and the absorbent power of the breeze passing over it, that raise the vapor which, by the curious mechanism of the atmosphere, is afterwards formed into cloud and mist, and showered down on the earth in rain and snow.—Here again, our emblem is most appropriate. The peace of the believer, like the rain that swells the stream, comes from above. All is the gift of a gracious God. Its original source, however, is the righteousness, the redeeming work of Christ. Fallen man, in himself, can look to Heaven for nothing but vengeance. From the bounty of God, as Creator, he can hope for no good; all such claim has been forfeited by sin. It is only from the mercy of God, as His Redeemer, that any blessing can come to ruined man. In Christ we have 'abundance of peace,' but, without Him, we have nothing before us but woe. When, therefore, we rejoice in his grace, we must not only offer the tribute of praise, but with that praise we must mingle confession.—When we bless the Lord for his goodness we must remember that the goodness has been shown to the ungrateful and the rebellious. Like the living ones before the throne, who, while they unite with the angels in ascribing honour, glory, and blessing to the Lamb, cast their crowns at His feet, and offer up their homage to Him who had redeemed them by His blood, we must remember that every blessing has been purchased for us by the agonies of the cross. 'Not unto us, Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name be all the glory.'

All the water in the river returns again to the sea.—'Unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.' In like manner, all the blessings bestowed on His people not only come from the grace of the Saviour, but are intended to be employed in extending the dominion and confirming the government of the great

Immanuel. As the eternal Son, He possesses in Himself all the perfections of divinity; as the son of Mary, the 'man Christ Jesus,' He is without spot or blemish; as the great Atonement, He needs not, and asks not, the aid of any; but, as the Head of the Church, in gathering in and perfecting His saints, His people are called on to act as His agents and fellow-laborers. All their talents and their opportunities must be devoted to His service. As every grace bestowed upon them comes from the Redeemer, so every gift must return to the source from which it came, through earnest endeavour to perform His will and honor His holy name.— In this devotion of themselves to God, believers find their highest enjoyment and their highest reward. A share in the Redeemer's righteousness is the foundation of all their hopes; a share in His labor of love, in the work which the Father hath given Him to do, is the height of their ambition and the perfection of their bliss.

Such are the privileges of true believers, Peace as a river, Righteousness as the waves of the sea. Their present revenue is the peace that passeth understanding; the tenure of their possession is the infinite merit of Christ; and the destiny that is set before them is a perfected union with the Saviour, when clothed in his righteousness, and bearing His likeness, they shall share in His glory and associate in His work.

With such prospects before us, let us, like the river, ever filling and ever flowing be continually seeking, through every channel of grace, to be filled with the fullness of God; and, being filled, let us devote ourselves, and all the gifts that are given us, to the promotion of our brother's well-being, and to the advancement of the Redeemer's cause.

"I THOUGHT IT WAS MY MOTHER'S VOICE."

A friend told me, not long ago, a beautiful story about kind words. A good lady, living in one of our large cities, was passing a drinking saloon just as the brutal keeper was thrusting a young man out into the street. He was very young, and very pale, but his haggard face and wild eyes told that he was very far gone in the road to ruin, as with horrid

oaths he brandished his clenched fists, swearing that he would be revenged upon the man who had so ill-used him. This poor young man was so excited and blinded with passion that he did not see the lady, who stood very near to him, until she laid her hand upon his arm, and spoke, in her gentle, loving voice, asking him what was the matter.

At the first kind word the young man started as though a heavy blow had struck him, and turned quickly round, paler than before, and trembling from head to foot. He surveyed the lady for a moment, and then, with a sigh of relief, he said—

"I thought it was my mother's voice, it sounded so strangely like it. But her voice has been hushed in death for many years."

"You had a mother, then," said the lady, "and she loved you?"

With that sudden revulsion of feeling which often comes to people of fine nervous temperaments, the young man burst into tears, and sobbed out, "Oh, yes, I had an angel mother, and she loved her boy! but since she died all the world has been against me, and I am lost! lost to good society, lost to honour, lost to decency, and lost for ever!"

"No, not lost for ever; for God is merciful, and his pitying love can reach the chief of sinners," said the lady, in her low, sweet voice; and the timely words swept the hidden chords of feeling which had been untouched in the young man's heart so long, thrilling it with magic power, and awakening a host of tender emotions, which had been buried very deep beneath the rubbish of sin and crime.

More gentle words the lady spoke, and when she passed on her way the young man followed her. He marked the house where she entered, and wrote the name which was on the silver door-plate in his little memorandum-book. Then he walked slowly away, with a deep, earnest look on his white face, and deeper, more earnest feelings in his aching heart.

Years glided by, and the gentle lady had quite forgotten the incident we have related, when one day a stranger sent up his card, and desired to speak with her. Wondering much who it could be, she went down to the parlour, where she found a noble-looking, well-dressed man, who rose deferentially to meet her. Holding out his hand he said—"Pardon me, madam, for this intrusion; but I have come many miles to thank you for the great service you rendered me a few years ago," said he, in a trembling voice.

The lady was puzzled, and asked for an explanation, as she did not remember ever having seen the gentleman before.

"I have changed so much," said the man, "that you have quite forgotten me; but though I only saw your face once, I am sure

I should have recognized it anywhere. And your voice too; it is so like my mother's!"

Those last words made the lady remember the poor young man she had kindly spoken to in front of the drinking saloon so long before, and she mingled her tears with those which were falling slowly over the man's cheeks.— After the first gush of emotion had subsided, the gentleman sat down and told the lady how those few gentle words had saved him, and been instrumental in making him what he then was.

"The earnest expression of 'No, not lost for ever,' followed me wherever I went," said he, "and it always seemed that it was the voice of my mother speaking to me from the tomb. I repented of my many transgressions, and resolved to live as Jesus and my mother would be pleased to have me; and by the mercy and grace of God I have been enabled to resist temptation, and keep my good resolutions."

"Thank God!" exclaimed the lady; "I never dreamed there was such power in a few kind words before, and surely ever after this I shall take more pains to speak them to all the sad and suffering ones I meet in the walks of life."

REFLEX INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIAN EFFORT.

Christianity has very little in common with the maxims of this world. Worldly wisdom is only another name for selfishness; heavenly wisdom is synonymous with benevolence.— The former renders the individual everything, and the community nothing, except as it contributes to the gratification or aggrandizement of self. The latter merges self into the service of our common humanity. The principles are distinct as darkness and light. Jesus, the founder of Christianity, was the embodiment of benevolence, the prototype of every excellence.— Satan, the fountain of worldly wisdom, is the embodiment of selfishness, the enemy of righteousness. The former went about doing good; the latter as a roaring lion goes about seeking whom he may devour. But Christianity, while it lays the axe at the root of the tree of selfishness, promises to its promulgation the highest reward. "The liberal soul shall be made fat, and he that waters others shall himself be watered."

The Christian, in his effort, has a double reward. The benevolence of his soul is gratified in seeing the object of his compassion relieved, and while thus contributing to the joy of others, he has the internal satisfaction of having done his duty.

Christian effort promotes humility, a central and indispensable Christian grace. We know not our own weakness till we have tested it

by effort; nor do we know our strength till we learn, by the fruitlessness of self-dependent effort, to lean upon our Strength and our Redeemer.

Christian effort gives new life to prayer.— It is in our conscious weakness we are driven to the throne of grace, and there we renew our strength, and beneath the shadow of the cross, if ever, become strong in the Lord and in the power of his strength. Prayer is the language of humility and self-renunciation. It recognizes God upon the throne, and the suppliant before him in the condition of the most absolute dependence.

Active Christian effort dispels the doubts that spring from idleness. Spiritual sloth is fatal to religious enjoyment. Had it not been for the newly opened channels of benevolence which missions and Sabbath-schools have presented, it is our deliberate judgment Christianity could not long have held its own with the fearful odds of the new recruits of infidelity and worldliness against it. The minds of Fuller and Hall, of Ryland and Sutcliff, and many other able ministers in England, were absorbed in efforts to comfort their desponding brethren, when the cry of millions of the heathen world roused the churches, whose members were relieved from doubts just in proportion to their interest in missions.—*San Francisco Evangel.*

THE DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY.

A person who is seeking God, and seeking salvation through his Son, ought to apply the doctrine of the divine sovereignty, not thus, "God is sovereign, and therefore, though now I am seeking salvation, yet he may deny it me," for this is false; but this, "God is sovereign, and therefore he might have left me, as he has left others, not to seek him, but to reject and despise him; but this he has not done." That is the proper sphere of the divine sovereignty.

It is manifested in the wonderful working, whereby, in the course of his providence, one person is made to seek after him, while another is left not to do so. But it is not manifested in this, that any ever sought his face in vain. (Is. xlv. 19.) "They shall praise the Lord that seek him." (Ps. xxii. 26.)

Yea, in every degree of seeking of him, this reflection should encourage and lead us to say, "Blessed be God who has brought me thus far, thus much further than others!" The doctrine should, as to practice, be always applied to a thing past, not to any thing to come. So it always is in Scripture. Men know the divine determinations concerning events, only by the events themselves.—*Dr. John Love.*

THE SHIP "POLAR STAR" ON FIRE.

The following vivid description of a fire at sea is extracted from the Memorials of Sergeant William Marjouran, a very interesting volume published by Nisbet & Co., London. He had taken his passage in the *Polar Star*, bound for New Zealand. On 16th August, 1854, they left England,—and had a prosperous voyage till they passed St. Helena.

"On the 30th September we were visited by a heavy gale of wind, the sea running mountains high, and breaking over our vessel with a fury that defied resistance. During the night our jib-boom was carried away, but such was the roaring of the waves that we did not hear the crash. In the morning, however, we saw it trailing in the water, held on to the vessel by the sheet and halyard. Our bowsprit was also considerably sprung. The gale, by this time, had almost subsided, and our hopes revived. We were now (1st October, Sunday) in 30° south latitude, and 25° west longitude. No vessel could I think, have made more speed than ours did, and we often congratulated one another on the prospect of a speedy conclusion of our voyage, and talked of the pleasures awaiting us in our newly adopted country. But oh! how soon are the hopes of finite man defeated, and his intentions frustrated. At half eight o'clock this morning (Sunday, 1st October) the fearful cry of 'Fire!' was heard sounding through the ship; and in a few moments smoke was issuing from every hatchway. When the alarm was given, some of our passengers were in bed, others at breakfast, myself and my wife were just about to sit down on deck to ours, but what became of it I never knew. Every one was now seen running wildly to and fro; some with only a blanket round them, and others half dressed; women calling for their children, and wives for their husbands. The women and children were soon hurried into the cabin which was on the upper deck, and the crew, male passengers and soldiers, began to throw water down the hold. But we soon discovered that it was useless, as the fire was evidently gaining on us, and we were in danger of being suffocated with smoke. So the cap-

tain gave the order to batten down the hatches; and as everything we possessed was below, our worldly all was lost. Despair was now visible on every face, while each and all expected that death would soon put an end to their terror. We were in a burning ship, a thousand miles from land; while to crown all, a heavy sea was running, that would have swamped our boats the very instant they touched the water. Who could have imagined our feelings at this moment? Husbands and wives, parents and children, viewing each other in dismay, expecting soon to receive the last earthly embrace! At half past nine o'clock the women and children were sent to the quarter deck, as the smoke had now reached the cabin; here they remained until they left the ship, (three days afterwards,) exposed to the spray and cold, without any covering overhead. The smoke and steam having now reached the cabin store-room, it was thought advisable to try and rescue what we could; so the steward managed to get some biscuits, a bottle or two of wine, and about two quarts of brandy.

"While this was going on, the principal portion of the crew, passengers, and soldiers engaged in getting the boats ready, and throwing every moveable article overboard. After much labor, the long boat was hung in slings over the side, ready to be lowered; but it was then that we saw our helpless condition, for no boat could live in such a sea. Yet a drowning man will catch at a straw; and, while we felt encouraged at the launching of the boats, we seemed to forget that they would be useless. In our hurry and alarm at the cry of 'Fire!' we had destroyed the only cask of fresh water we had on deck by mixing salt water with it, and throwing it down the hold. We had some horses on deck, in a kind of box that had been temporarily erected for their use, under which was a water-tank, from which a pipe was conducted about two inches above the deck, receiving a small hand-pump. We were enabled to fill two or three casks, which, providentially, had not been destroyed; but in order to accomplish this, two of the splendid horses had to be shot and thrown overboard.—This occupied but a very short space of time. And now death appeared amongst

us. One of our passengers, Mrs H— exchanged this scene of confusion and distress for an eternity of bliss. She had been ill ever since she embarked, and, possibly, the alarming position in which we were placed occasioned her death.— She left a husband and five children to lament her departure.

“When all that I have stated had been performed, we were left, each to his own thoughts. We had stopped every hole and crevice with the manure that was in the horse-box, this was very useful, but we could not prevent the smoke from escaping. About this time I went to the captain and asked him if he had any objection to our having our usual Sunday morning service. He said, “Not the slightest.” As the doctor had usually performed this service, I requested him to begin; but after he had read a few sentences from the Prayer-book, I discovered that he was quite unfit. I accordingly read the 107th Psalm, and afterwards engaged in prayer; and thus ended our solemn morning service.

All were now told off for the boats, sixty for the launch, twenty one for the pinnace, and fourteen for the gig. This was done, however, merely to satisfy the people, for the boats were not capable of holding more than half the number mentioned. But the secret determination of the soldiers was that the women and children should first leave the ship, with a sufficient number of men in charge of them. We discovered that we had neither sails nor masts, nor yet any holes made to receive the row-locks, and our carpenter could find only one hammer and chisel.— As the system we had adopted to prevent the admission of air had so far proved beneficial, it was proposed to cut small holes through the deck into which we inserted funnels. Through these we poured water, and then set the pumps to work to discharge it from the hold, returning it through the funnels: this we continued to do until we left the ship. In the evening we were told off into two watches, Lieutenant T— and Sergeant C— had charge of the first, and the first mate and myself of the second.

“With night fast approaching, we were steering towards Rio Janeiro, and out of the usual track of vessels, having seen none

for some weeks. Oh, how anxiously was every eye directed towards the horizon as long as a glimmer of daylight remained; but all in vain. Alone in her ruin rode on our burning ship, the smoke issuing from every aperture. We saw the sun go down but with little prospect of ever witnessing another sunrise. My dear wife and myself now committed ourselves to God in prayer, trusting that, if he was about to remove us from all earthly troubles, he would take us to that place where the weary are at rest. We continued our labours without a moment's pause during the night, and praised be the Lord! once more beheld the day. We now began to suffer from the heat, while the water which we were passing through the hold was also getting hot. This induced us to believe that it must be coming in contact with the fire. We managed to get a little refreshment; but the water which we took from the tank had become so nauseous, in consequence of the vapours from the burning cargo, that we could scarcely drink it. Our women and children had also suffered a great deal from the cold during the night; no sleep could be obtained. Thus Monday passed away. Another sun rose and set—another day of apprehension and alarm. We had killed one of our sheep, but could not get it properly cooked, as we had no coal on deck. Ever since the fire broke out, the mast head had carried our flag of distress, and been frequently occupied by look-outs, with a powerful telescope to scan every part of the horizon. We were beginning to feel cold, faint, and exhausted with incessant exposure and wet, yet another night of weariness and toil awaited us.

“Still, notwithstanding all our sufferings we had many causes of gratitude. We had been running towards land at the rate of eight or nine knots an hour, ever since the commencement of the fire. We had no sickness among us, neither had any sustained any serious injury. We had also an allowance of biscuit, wine and brandy for each, which preserved us from starvation; we still felt our lives precious; and the presence of our wives and children urged us on to effort and endurance, almost beyond our strength. So passed Monday night. Tuesday came, and found the fire quickly gaining on us, inasmuch

as the pitch was beginning to melt in the deck-seams, and the water was becoming too hot for the hand. That, too, which we had been drinking was now so disagreeable, that not even our great thirst could induce us to use it. At length the night drew on,—none can imagine the exact thoughts of each as he worked at the pumps. Thus much, however, I can undertake to say, that there were men on board who had long denied the existence of an eternal God, and the immortality of their souls, but who now shrank from the thought of appearing before him whom they had so long rejected. My own reflections often carried me far away to the land of my birth, where those I loved received that fond farewell which now appeared the last. On self examination, I asked myself the question, ‘Am I in the faith? Have I built my hopes of salvation upon the rock Christ Jesus?’ I bless God, that though my life was still precious to me, and to be guarded still by every human effort, I felt an inward peace which cast out all fear, and gave me resignation to the divine will. On being relieved from my watch, I took my Prayer-book from my pocket with the intention of reading. But imagine my delight,—on the very first page to which I turned, I saw inscribed that ancient promise of glorious encouragement—‘God is our refuge and our strength: a very present help in trouble,’ Ps. XLVI. 1. I shouted to all around me, then read the psalm aloud. Possibly some who heard it will remember it on their death bed.

“This evening I was thinking of my misfortune, and of God’s mercy through Christ, when, about six o’clock, it pleased the Lord to gladden our ears and cheer our hearts with the blessed cry of ‘A sail on the weather bow!’ All lungs and throats were instantly strained, and three vehement cheers resounded over the waters. As night was fast closing over us, the men were admonished not to build their hopes too high, for fear the vessel should not see our signals. Having a little powder in reserve, we at once commenced upon our guns; but as these did not attract attention, we fired two blue lights from the deck, and one—our last—from the fore-yard. I will not attempt to describe the sickening eagerness with which

we watched its effect, or yet the unutterable joy with which, after a weary ten minutes’ interval, we witnessed a similar light burning from the deck of the other vessel. Now woke up the grateful hymn, ‘Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!’ We soon saw our deliverer bearing down upon us, and, in half an hour, were hailed by—

“Ship, ahoy!”

“Hallo!”

“Do you want any assistance?”

“Yes!”

“All right, I’ll go about and lie to.”

“Captain W—— and Lieutenant T—— ordered the boat to be lowered, and soon we saw it alongside the vessel. She proved to be the *Annamooka*, Captain H—— from Callao, bound to Cadiz with a cargo of guano. The captain promised to stand by us all night; but, in the meantime it was thought advisable to remove the women and children. I volunteered my services as a boatman for this purpose, and after three trips, we had the unspeakable joy of seeing them in the cabin of the *Annamooka*. It was no easy task to conduct the boat from ship to ship, for a very heavy sea was running, and although the vessels were not more than half a mile apart, yet frequently neither was visible. But, thanks be to God, no accident occurred. The next morning, October 4, our pigs and sheep were sent on board, and at noon Captain H—— paid us a visit, and after inspecting our ship with Captain W—— and Lieutenant T——, came to the conclusion that it would be better to abandon her at once, as she could not hold together much longer. The boats being all ready, the order was given to open the hatches, and it was then that we discovered the actual state of things. The pent-up flames raced along the main-deck with great fury and caught the rigging. Twenty of us with difficulty got into the launch being slowly towed along by the skiff, while the burning ship, which we had left in full sail, seemed endeavoring to compass our destruction, by bearing down upon us.

“We had not quitted her, however, more than ten minutes when the main-mast went over the side, tearing the fore-top and mizzen-top with it, and ripping up the decks, so giving greater vent to the

maddened flames. In two or three minutes all the masts went over, and the vessel was in a livid sheet of flame from stem to stern, Our fears were now great, that we had only escaped from one kind of destruction to be overtaken by another.—The *Annamooka*, in order to escape the fire and smoke had stood off to some distance, so that the distance between us was evidently increasing. The sea, too, was rising, and night was rapidly coming on; our men were nearly exhausted; we could use no oars in our boat, and the skiff that was towing us was almost powerless. We shipped some heavy seas, and the rain was pouring down in torrents; while, to heighten our apprehensions, an enormous shark followed in our wake, within an oar's length of our stern, I think it was the largest I ever saw. After beating about in this manner for some time, we were observed by the *Annamooka*, a boat was immediately despatched to our assistance, and we were soon safe on board. My heart was raised in grateful praise to Almighty God, on looking back at the dangers we had just escaped. Let him who would ridicule the idea of the superintendance of divine Providence, reflect on this simple illustration, furnished by the experience of myself and my fellow sufferers, of a truth so very full of comfort, before he ventures to nourish his unbelief. Any one who has taken a long voyage will know that it is possible for a ship to be even months at sea without seeing either land or vessel. And should any fatal accident befall it, its fate would, in all probability, never be known. Might it not have been so with the *Polar Star*?

“Then, too, as regards the manner of the timely rescue I had it from an officer of the *Annamooka* that she had been more than a fortnight on the opposite tack to the one she was on when we saw her. Then let me, thank the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men. Is not this a direct interposition of Providence?”—*Memorials of William Marjouram.*

It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

TO AN INFIDEL.

You reject the Scriptures, and scoff at the Saviour's teaching: in so doing, you tend to fulfil prophecy, for it was foretold that in these latter days there “*should be mockers,*” who should walk after their own ungodly ways. You profess to have searched the Scriptures, and are dissatisfied with the result; this is explained by the Book you spurn—“The scorner seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not: but knowledge is easy unto him that understandeth.” With your mistaken views, you will do well to remember the saying of one of the profoundest minds of modern times: “In Scripture there is light enough to guide him that loveth light, and darkness enough to confound him that loveth darkness;” or, to use the quaint language of a good old man, “There is in God's word food enough to cherish the humble, but bones enough to choke the proud.” When you sneer at the claims of Christ, and at the statements contained in the Gospel, you pay a very poor tribute to your own intellectual attainments, and afford a sad evidence that the extent of your knowledge is not equal to the bitterness of your hostility. You lose sight of this great fact, that the literary character of the age in which Christ and his Apostles lived qualified men in a pre-eminent manner for the investigation of evidence, and the minds of the men of those days were so disciplined that they would believe nothing without the strongest evidence that the nature of the subject admitted; and we may fairly affirm if Bolingbroke, and Voltaire, Hume, Gibbon, and Paine, had lived at the time of Christ's appearance upon earth, they could not have brought against the Gospel a larger amount of intellect, talent, and of hatred, than the intellect, talent, and hatred that then existed. Yet Christianity grappled with its ablest foes, and, in the fulness of their strength, made the challenge, and boldly dared philosophy and learning, wit and sophistry, ridicule and sarcasm to withstand her claims. The claims of Christ, as the Messiah, were submitted to the highest and fiercest scrutiny the world ever produced, and its opponents were neither feeble reasoners nor men of common powers; therefore Christians of the present day do

not turn pale with fear, or tremble for the safety of the truths of the Christian faith, and for the claims to inspiration of Holy Writ, because some men of modern days, less gifted than the enemies of olden times, think fit to cavil at the deep mysteries which the Bible contains. You seem to prize too highly your reasoning powers. Men who overrate their reasoning powers ought to know that the highest exercise of reason is the ceasing to reason about the things that are above their reason. The unbelieving Greek, the opposing Roman, and the prejudiced Jew saw so many evidences of Christ's holiness, truth, and power, that, in spite of wounded pride and bitter hostility, they were constrained to acknowledge the despised Nazarene as the Christ—the Son of the living God. Therefore the truth of the Christian faith is not a question that remains to be settled in the nineteenth century. It has been already settled; for it was brought into court, before competent judges, and was by the result settled—completely settled—some eighteen years ago. It was tried before the courts of Athens, of Rome, and of Jerusalem; and from their verdict there is no appeal: for on earth there is no higher tribunal: and the millions of Greeks, of Romans, and of Jews that became the disciples of Christ unite to confirm the truth of the Gospel, and to rebuke the scoffer. Nor is this the only truth the past has confirmed: it has shown that in life men may be infidels, but as infidels they cannot die; they let go their creed, though they may retain their impenitence. Will our correspondent ask himself, What must be the state of that man's mind who can seek to destroy that Christianity which has ameliorated the condition of man—which has placed woman in her fitting station—which every day tends to banish ignorance, and cruelty, and infanticide; and which has conferred indescribable blessings on laws, morals, religion, literature, science, commerce, and domestic comfort?

We say to our correspondent, At present, you sin against Christ: but in the book you despise, it is written. "All blasphemy against the son of Man may be forgiven." Take heed lest, by perseverance in error and in insult, you sin against the Holy Ghost—an offence which can never, never be forgotten. Be wise, then, in time, and

guard against the condition of those men who hereafter gain wisdom, but, to their sorrow, discover that it is wisdom gained too late. Listen to a voice from Heaven:—"Why will ye die?" "My son, give me thine heart;" and, "From this day forth I WILL BLESS THEE."

SHORT ARROWS.

"I KNOW THERE IS A GOD."

"I know there is a God," said a converted Indian chief to a Christian missionary. "I hear him in the thunder; I see him in the sunbeam, and in the starlight. The air is his breath and the breath of all. He is the great Father of all. He is a great Spirit, living everywhere, and giving life, and I feel him in my heart. When I die, my breath will go back to him."

HEAVEN.

The days on earth may be evil—they are few. Soon will the darkness be past, and the true light shine. There shall be *no night* in heaven. There the tear of sorrow never wets the cheek, the heart is never wrung with anguish, the icy hand of death itself is dead. In God's presence is "fulness of joy." "Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself, for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended."

FALSE PROFESSIONS.

Judas kissed our Saviour when he was betraying him, and alas! do not many nominal Christians in the present day resemble him? They bear the name and outward profession, but do not many of them bring, even to the Lord's table, a heart full of love to the world and of aversion to the Gospel, and are ready to betray their Master for the most paltry considerations, and do not blush to commit from time to time that offence which the traitor Judas committed but once?

PRAYER.

Prayer to the penitent heart is a sweet source of consolation, long, even, before the answer come: because a generous mind rejoices in acknowledging the obligations it desires to receive, or has received, or the faults, errors, and offences which it has committed; and a candid mind delights in

holy unburdenings ; and an humble mind, in the confession of its own incapacity for doing good—all which sentiments accompany penitential prayer ; and, also, that the exercise itself is a drawing nigh unto One who giveth liberally, and upbraideth not. God has no frown for the penitent. He hears their cry, and will help them.

THE IMPROVEMENT OF TIME.

Improve your time with the utmost diligence, remembering that it is given you for this end—that you may prepare for a better world. Spend no time so as afterwards to be obliged bitterly to repent of what you have done. Spend no time so as you cannot beg the blessing of God upon what you do. Spend no time without respect to God's glory, or your own welfare or another's good. Spend and improve your time so that your great work may be done before your life's end ; that when your few days are over, you may, through the merits of Christ, enter into a blessed eternity.

A WORD IN SEASON.

A word spoken in season, how good it is ! How often do the arrows of truth fall blunt and powerless upon the soul from their not being aimed at the right time !—We comonly allow the fault and the reproof to come too close together. We forget that a little interval between them would allow the offender time to think, the offended time to cool ; and both, when the grace of God should so incline them, the opportunity and time to pray. Had Samuel uttered his bold remonstrance to the Israelites under the first keen sense of the insult they had offered him, he would probably have been answered with scorn ; but having waited till they supposed he had forgotten their unkindness, he beholds them now meekly entreating for an interest in his prayers.

HOPE.

How rich are the colourings of hope !—rich as the hues of the rainbow, and almost as unsubstantial. Our hopes are always beautiful in the distance ; we never grasp them and find them as beautiful as when they first appeared to the mind. They lose their charm when they commence to be realised. All earthly hopes depart at last like sunbeams, the soul would be left in darkness, were it not for that hope which

never fades—that hope which grows brighter as earthly hopes depart. That hope is the light of Faith, and a beacon from the skies, ever gleaming—growing brighter and brighter to the longing eyes of the Christian.

“THE DOGS EAT OF THE CRUMBS.”

A good missionary, when travelling some years ago in South Africa, called at the house of a Dutch farmer, and asked for a night's lodging. The request was granted, and he at once made himself at home with the strangers. After a short time the farmer and his wife learned that their visitor was a minister ; and as the Dutch profess some respect for the form, at least, of godliness, it was proposed to have a religious service with the family. To this the farmer agreed, and the preparations for it were soon made. A great Dutch Bible, with heavy brass clasps, and which, it is feared, was not often opened, was placed upon the top of a long table in a very large room, with a lighted candle by which to read it. Mr. Moffat, the missionary, took his seat before the Bible, with the farmer on his right hand, and the farmer's wife on his left. Below them, on both sides of the table, were grown-up sons and daughters, and other members of the family.

All seemed now to be ready, and everybody expected that Mr. Moffat would begin ; but he was not satisfied. He knew that, besides those who sat before him, there were many Hottentot labourers on the farm, who never heard the name of Jesus, and to whom he was resolved, if possible, to preach the gospel of salvation ; but how to get them into the room he did not quite know. He resolved, however, to try. So, instead of beginning to read the Bible, he leaned forward, and seemed as if he were straining his eyes to see something in the distant and dark parts of the room.

After a little, the farmer noticed this movement, and asked Mr. Moffat what he was looking for. “ Oh ! ” said the missionary, “ I was only looking for the Hottentots.” In a moment a frown gathered upon the farmer's brow ; his lip curled as if to show his contempt ; and then, in a loud, rough, harsh tone, he said ; “ Hottentots is it you

want! Hottentots! Call in the dogs!—
Call in the dogs!"

This would have perplexed some men, but Mr. Moffat was prepared for it; as he knew well that many, like this farmer, thought that ministers might just as well preach to dogs as to Hottentots. Without, therefore, using any arguments of his own, he opened the Bible at the fifteenth chapter of Matthew, and read, with as much force and solemnity as he could, the twenty-seventh verse: Truth, Lord: *yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table!*" He then sat silent for a minute, and looked towards the farmer.—But as the rough man made no motion, so, fixed his dark eye full upon his host. Still the man sat silent, and did not seem to be moved. A third time, therefore, Mr. Moffat, turning toward him, and looking him full in the face, repeated the words, "*yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table.*" At once the farmer roared out: "Stop! I can stand it no longer;" and then added, "Call in the Hottentots! Call in the Hottentots!"

In a short time the large room was filled with such a congregation as every missionary desires to see, and such as Mr. Moffat delighted to address. They were poor and neglected, ignorant and sinful, and lost—just those that the Lord Jesus Christ came to seek and to save. It was a strange sight; and had some of our readers seen it, they would have both smiled and wept at what they saw. Seated upon the floor of that great room, or leaning against the wall, these poor creatures stared, and grinned, and wondered. Never before had they been gathered into that room to be addressed as immortal beings, and invited to enter the way to heaven. What Mr. Moffat said to them we cannot tell you, more than this, that he tried to explain, as plainly as he could, what they must do to be saved.

On the following morning the missionary went on his journey, and it was a long time before he had occasion to travel the road again. At length duty called him there; and as he drew near to the farm-house where he had formerly lodged, he saw a Hottentot woman working in a field close by. Suddenly she ceased to work, and stood looking earnestly toward him. Then she threw down her hoe, ran to the spot where he was, flung herself upon the ground,

clasped his knees, and began to weep and sob, and at the same time to express her thankfulness and joy. Mr. Moffat was surprised. He could not tell what all this meant; and, for a time, the poor woman was too much excited to tell him. At length she became more calm, and then she called to his remembrance the service which he had held in her master's house, and told him that she and her husband were amongst the ignorant Hottentots to whom he then preached; that the Word of God had entered their hearts; and that from that day they had been walking together in the path to heaven.

DUTY RIGHTLY PERFORMED.

We ought not to venture on the performance of a duty unless we bring God to it; or to rest satisfied unless we carry God from it. We should hear and obey the Psalmist's precept: "O seek the Lord and his strength, seek his face for evermore." Enter not into his house without due preparation. Previously meditate, examine and pray. Depart not till the light of divine favor rise upon thy soul.—It is Jesus Christ that must fit thee: and it is Jesus Christ that must meet thee; else it will be no ordinance of comfort to thy soul. The chariot is nothing if thy beloved is not in it. Therefore, hear and follow St. Bernard's practice: "Lord I never come to thee without thee; I never go from thee, but with thee." Blessed art thou, O Christian, who, as often as thou prayest, or praisest, or hearest the word, or sittest at a communion table, carriest Christ to all, enjoyest Christ in all, and bringest Christ from all. Happier is the least and lowest of the servants of Jesus than the greatest and most exalted potentate who knoweth him not. "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand in the tents of wickedness. If this be the case upon earth, how much more in heaven!—O come that one glorious day, whose sun shall never go down, nor any cloud obscure the lustre of his beams; that day when the temple of God shall be opened in heaven, and we shall be admitted to serve him forever therein!

O Lord! in all my approaches to thee, let me go out in thy strength, and return in thy presence.

THE GOOD NEWS.

APRIL 1st, 1863.

THREE ANCIENT WORTHIES.

In the Old Testament account of the children of Israel, three names stand prominently out among their worthies, as entitled to the love, and admiration, and imitation of succeeding ages. These are Joseph, Moses and David.

In the present article, we associate their names, not with the view of considering their respective characters, or comparing them with one another, but to notice a few points in which their experience was similar.

About these three worthies, we observe 1st. They were early impressed with the conviction that they were called to occupy a high position, and to do a great work.—It was so in the case of Joseph. “When seventeen years old, he was feeding the flock with his brethren, he was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah his father’s wives, and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report. And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it to his brethren, and they hated him on account of it. And he said unto them, “Hear I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed. For behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and behold your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf,” Gen. xxxvii. 6, 7. And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it to his brethren, and said, “Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and behold the sun, and the moon, and the eleven stars made obeisance to me.”—And he told it to his father, and to his brethren, and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, “What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy

mother, and thy brethren, indeed, come to bow down ourselves to thee, to the earth,” Gen xxxvii. 9, 10. It was probably so in the case of Moses, also. “By faith Moses when he *was come to years*, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season,” Heb. xi. 24, 25. We know from the narrative given in the book of Exodus, to what he considered himself called. It was to be a principal man, a prince and a judge over the children of Israel, Exod. ii. 15: It was so also in the case of David. And Samuel said unto Jesse, “Are here all thy children?”—And he said, “There remaineth yet the youngest, and behold he keepeth the sheep.” And Samuel said unto Jesse, “Send and fetch him, for we will not sit down till he come hither.” And he sent and brought him in. Now, he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the Lord said, “Arise, anoint him, for this is he.” Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren, and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward.” 1 Sam. xvi. 11, 12.—In the case of each of the three, the conviction was produced in different ways. The divine mode of procedure varying according to the necessity of the case.

We observe 2nd. That a long interval elapsed, between the period when that conviction was wrought, and the realization of their faith. In the case of Joseph twenty two years elapsed between the time of his first dream, and the time when his brethren stood around, and made obeisance to him. In the case of Moses forty years elapsed between the period when Moses presented himself to be a prince and a judge over the Hebrews, and the fulness of time when the Lord in the burning bush called him to lead them forth into the land of Canaan. In

the case of David fifteen years elapsed between the period of his anointing, and the time when he became King over all Israel. Why this interval was allowed we are not told. The fact however exists, and there must be reasons for it.

We observe 3rd. That no sooner were their convictions respectively made known than those individuals who by their relationship might have been supposed to rejoice at the event and to welcome it, treated those on whom the conviction had been wrought as if they were impostors.—When Joseph, in the simplicity of his heart told his brethren of this remarkable dream, he had had, instead of rejoicing with him, they hated him. “Shalt thou indeed reign over us? Or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams and his words.” Gen. 37. 8. Having dreamed another dream in which the sun and the moon and the Eleven stars made obeisance unto him, he told it also to his father and his brethren. The former rebuked him, and the latter envied him for his pains. This envy and hatred prompted them at last to sell him, where they hoped the fulfillment of his dream could never be realised. It was so with Moses when he left the honours and the prospects of Egypt to share the lot and the afflictions of the children of Israel he doubtless made known to them his conviction of duty, and the impressions that had been wrought upon his mind, but they received not his message. It might be said of him with some truth, “he came unto his own, and his own received him not.” It was so with David, though he had been anointed in the presence of his father and brethren, and though there could not be the shadow of a doubt on their minds as to the divinity of his call yet his brethren hated him.—This was seen in the conduct of Eliab his eldest brother. His anger was kindled against David for nothing. “Why, said

he, camest thou down hither? And with whom hast thou left these few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride and the naughtiness of thy heart for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle.”—When we read of the treatment which those three worthies received at the hands of their own brethren, and look at their conduct in the light of subsequent events, it is without excuse. They afterwards saw the consequences of their own ignorance and folly, and now reap the reward in being held in universal execration. We must not suppose that there is no tendency at the present day to this line of conduct. These things are written for our instruction to hold up as it were a mirror to human conduct among ourselves, as well as among others, and it would be well for us to give earnest heed to the things that are therein written.—God chooses his own means for carrying on his own work, and if He select a Joseph to the rejection of his senior in years, and passes by the handsome and brave Eliab, to fix upon the ruddy lad that keepeth the sheep, we ought to feel satisfied, and do our duty in the sphere within which we are placed.

We observe 4th. That the interval between the conviction and realization of their expectance, was a period of deep humiliation, and of preparation. The lad Joseph was too ignorant, and inexperienced in the ways of men to be placed in a superior social position to his father, and brethren. He needed to be taught the deceitfulness of the heart, and the want of confidence to be placed in princes. He needed to learn that the man who had to control others, must first control himself. Hence his brothers, who ought to have loved, cherished, and protected him, were allowed to manifest their hate, and sell him into Egypt. The adulterous wife of Potiphar was allowed, not only to tempt him, but also to cover his fair fame with the most

galling reproaches, and hurl him to prison. The butler of the court of Pharaoh, was allowed to buoy up his hopes for a season, and then, through inexcusable forgetfulness, leave him to languish the innocent victim of an unscrupulous woman.—Through these long years of painful servitude, and undeserved reproach, he walked in the valley of humiliation, learning more and more to know himself, to know his fellows, and to know his God, and when the period of preparation was consummated, he was exalted to an honour such as his former dream had foretokened. The man Moses, was by no means the meekest man in the world, when he left the palace of the king of Egypt for the hut of the oppressed Hebrew. He was evidently hot tempered, violent and rash, for when he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren, he looked this way, and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand. This action shewed that he was unfit to lead the hosts of Israel, as the representative of Jehovah, and this action being known to his brethren, in whose friendship he found he could not trust, he fled into the land of Midian. Think of this wonderful man, who possessed all the learning of the Egyptians, and powers of command that qualified him to lead the hosts of Egypt. Who was gifted with talents and accomplishments that might have adorned the court of the richest and mightiest monarchy of the age, obliged to flee into an obscure district of country, take up his abode in the home of a comparatively humble, but worthy man, and spend his time in attending a flock of sheep. For forty years his life passed away so silent, that there were no deeds worth to be sung in song, or to be emblazoned on the pages of story. For forty years the silent action of little things, like gentle waves playing

daily on the rocky beach gradually subdued the irritating points in his nature, and left him one of the meekest of men. When this long season of preparation was past, the Lord called him forth to lead his people out of Egypt. The anointed king of Israel did not find it a single step from the sheep-cote to the throne, but for many a year, despised and rejected, and ill-treated by King Saul, his sycophantic followers, and the multitude of selfish men, who for interests sake would stand by the king.—Hunted like a partridge on the mountains, treated as a rebel, and driven from place to place, as the offscouring of the earth, he by that severe and trying ordeal was being qualified to be king in Israel, and to lead his subjects against every invading foe.—Just as it was in the experience of these three worthies, so is it in the case of all whom the Lord calls to spheres of usefulness in this world. The period of humiliation must precede the period of exaltation, and in proportion to the depth of the former may we expect the height of the latter. Courage, therefore, all ye who are in the vale of obscurity. March on. Every day takes you nearer to the summits of the adjoining hill, when you will experience the pleasant satisfaction of prominent usefulness, and be better prepared to withstand its dangers and deceits.

We observe lastly. These three worthies, great in Israel, when they came to the position of exaltation to which they were called, could discern the advantage of the trial through which they had passed.—They appreciated the lessons which they had learned in the school of affliction. They were grateful for the influence which made every thing that appeared for the worst, to be the very best for them. When they were in the furnace it was unbearable enough. When they were under the pressure they could scarcely help but cry out. But no sooner were they out of

it, than they saw that the hand that led them was divine. Whatever instruments the Lord may employ in fitting us for our future usefulness, they are but instruments at the best. They may be rough. They may be of silver, or copper, or of clay, but they are instruments. Let us look beyond them, knowing that though no affliction for the moment, is joyous but grievous, nevertheless, it yields all the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them who are exercised thereby.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF WORSHIP.

When we consider the structure of the universe, we are compelled to admire its harmony and perfection. In the solar system, the sun, moon, and planets move in their proper spheres so regularly, that their motions can be calculated with unerring certainty. This earth of ours is framed with astonishing skill. Its surface is furnished with materials of great diversity, but beautifully fitted for the use and enjoyment of man, and for the production and sustenance of plants and animals.—Every plant and animal is located where it can flourish, and is constructed with extraordinary and minute wisdom. Every blade of grass, the meanest bird, insect, quadruped, fish, and reptile, is an exhibition of workmanship far beyond the greatest achievements of human art.—

Wherever we look, we discern at once the traces of a Divine and Almighty hand.—There is therefore, a supreme Creator, whose wisdom, power, and goodness is to be seen in the creatures he has formed.

Not only so: the universe—creation, Nature, or whatever else we may call it—equally makes known the providence of God. We have so many proofs of his presence, and continued care and superintendence, that we feel the truth of what St. Paul said, "In him we live, and move, and have our being:" and, again, "He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." This constant providence is well described in what the same Apostle said to the idolaters at Lystra: "He left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and

gladness." Our Lord Jesus Christ goes still further, and in his address to his disciples says, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered." These and many similar statements quite agree with what we see around us. He who created all things, preserves, controls, and superintends what he has made. The universal Creator is the universal Parent and Provider, the Father and the Ruler of all. This is equally the doctrine of Scripture and the conclusion of right reason.

The question, however, arises, whether he, who is so careful for the temporal order and welfare of his creatures, looks for any acknowledgment at their hands. There can be no doubt that his perfect works reflect his perfection, and that the happiness he gives to his creatures reflects his goodness. In this sense the "music of the spheres" is not a poetic fiction. In this sense the Psalmist exclaims, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge." Or, in the beautiful language of Addison:—

"What though, in solemn silence, all
Move round this dark terrestrial ball?
What though no real voice nor sound
Amidst their radiant orbs be found?

In reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice:
For ever singing, as they shine,
The hand that made us is Divine!"

This silent and involuntary praise is known to man; nor can it be unknown to Him who has called it forth. If he knows it, surely he approves it. Now, if he knows and approves the praise which dumb creation and preservation imply, why should he not know and approve the praise which rational and intelligent creatures may render to him? The mute works of his hands glorify him according to their power; why should those be silent which can understand his excellency and declare his praise? Whether willing or unwilling, we must all praise him as part of the grand chorus of his works. Every one of us joins in the loud psalm of creation with the morning stars and the sons of God,

who sing together and shout for joy. The framework of our bodies praises him, for we are "fearfully and wonderfully made." The mind, with its powers, praises him, for he is its Creator, and has endowed us with it. Our whole being praises him, for to him we owe it, and it is under his incessant control. There is a striking expression in the 145th Psalm, to this effect:—"The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works." This is what we have asserted, but mark what follows:—"All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee." The works of the Lord praise him, as we have said, but, in addition to this, the saints, or the pious, will bless him. Those who are rightly inclined will feel that, if God has so framed his inanimate and irrational works that they praise him, it becomes those who have reason and conscience to praise him too. All such will respond with joy to the invitation of the Psalmist in the 95th Psalm, "O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand."

What we mean amounts to this—that the worship of God is our reasonable service. The things which are unconscious praise him unconsciously; let us, who are conscious, praise him consciously. We must do this, if we would honour him according to the extent of our power. We must do this, if we honour him in accordance with the sober conclusions of our judgment and the impulses of our hearts. Hence it is, that all nations have had some form of worship or another. Even those who have been at a loss to realise the Divine unity, and, in their folly, have devised gods many and lords many, have had forms of worship. They have seen that they had blessings which only a supernatural power could confer upon them, they have felt thankful for those blessings, and they have worshipped "the unknown god" to whom they have ascribed them. They have seen that they were exposed to evils which only one more mighty than they could ward off, and they have worshipped that more mighty one, though they knew him not. They have seen, too, that they required good things for the body and the soul, which were beyond

their influence to attain, and they have sought them from him whom they thought could alone provide them. Although they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts were so darkened that they "changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things," they never denied the instinct and impulse of worship. This is, at least, an argument for the reasonableness of religion, and it condemns the conduct of those who refuse to honour God, as alike unreasonable and unnatural. An old French author says, "If we consult the whole world, its suffrages are unanimous—no nations under heaven are atheists; no body of men is collected together, in a social state and civilised, without worship. The very savage, in the most dreary and barren climate, in islands which seem thrown up by chance in the sea, lifts up his hands to heaven to implore help and benefit. Two human beings have never been associated without experiencing this powerful instinct. Ignorance, passion, and stupidity have often perverted it, but could never stifle it. If ever Nature has spoken, by what sign can we recognise its voice, if not by this general and uniform agreement? Philosophers say that the natural law is that which is conformable to the will of all men: has the will of men been more identical on any point than this—to render homage to the Author of Nature?" And again, "Religion is the distinctive character of man, an endowment of reason and of understanding, which man cannot renounce without becoming like a brute."

The question, however, may yet be asked, When and how ought man to worship God? How can I know when my worship is such as he approves, and such as will bring me a blessing and not a curse? This introduces to us the whole subject of Divine revelation, a subject upon which we cannot now enter. We will only say that God has revealed his will to us, and that we have this revelation in the Bible. In that blessed book we have all that it is needful for us to know on this great and momentous theme. There only can we learn that God requires and accepts the worship of man, and how man ought to worship him. There we may read those

infallible instructions, which all the promptings of Nature and all the searchings of wisdom fail to discover. There we can ascertain not only the way to please our Maker and Ruler, but to obtain pardon for the past, grace for all the time, and glory when time is ended. On another occasion we shall go more fully into this matter.

ALPHABET OF LIFE.

By the Best Authors.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

Accomplishments are sociable; but there is nothing so sociable as a cultivated mind.

BEHAVIOUR.

There is hardly any bodily blemish which a winning behaviour will not conceal, or make tolerable; and there is no external grace which ill-nature or affectation will not deform.

CONVERSATION.

Conversation is the daughter of reason, the mother of knowledge, the breath of the soul, the commerce of hearts, the bond of friendship, the nourishment of content, and the occupation of men of wit.

DUTIES.

Be not diverted from your duty by any idle reflections the silly world may make upon you, for their censures are not in your power, and, consequently, should not be any part of your concern.—*Epicætetus*.

EARLY RISING.

I would have inscribed on the curtains of your bed, and on the walls of your bed-chamber, "If you do not rise early, you can make progress in nothing." If you do not set apart your hours of reading—if you suffer yourself or any one else to break in upon them—your days will slip through your hands unprofitably, and frivolous, and unenjoyed by yourself.—*Lord Chatham*.

FIRMNESS.

Firmness, both in sufferance and exertion, is a character which I would wish to possess. I have always despised the language of complaint, and the cowardly, feeble resolve.

GENIUS.

The three indispensables of genius are—understanding, feeling, and perseverance. The three things that enrich genius are—contentment of mind, the cherishing of good thoughts, and exercising the memory.—*Southey*.

HABIT.

Unless the habit leads to happiness, the best habit is to contract none.—*Zimmerman*.

Habit, a second nature, which often supersedes the first.

INDUSTRY.

If wisdom is the head, and honesty the heart, energetic industry is the right hand of every exalted vocation; without which the shrewdest insight is blind, and the best intentions are abortive.

JUDGMENT.

In forming a judgment, lay your hearts void of foretaken opinions; else, whatever is done or said will be measured by a false rule, like them who have the jaundice, to whom everything appeareth yellow.—*Sir P. Sidney*.

KNOWLEDGE.

It is never too late to learn what it is always necessary to know; and it is no shame to learn, so long as we are ignorant—that is to say, so long as we live.

LEARNING.

That learning which is got by one's own observation and experience, is as far beyond that which is got by precept, as the knowledge of a traveller exceeds that which is got by a map.

MANNERS.

Graceful manners are the outward form of refinement in the mind, and good affections in the heart.

NO.

No is a wonderful word. Be not afraid to use it. Many a man has pined in misery for years, for not having courage to pronounce that little monosyllable.

ORDER.

Order is the sanity of the mind, the health of the body, the peace of the city, the security of the state. As the beams of a house, as the bones to the microcosm of man, so is order to all things.—*Southey*.

POLITENESS.

True politeness is a virtue of the understanding, and of the heart.

QUIETNESS.

True quietness of heart is got by resisting our passions, not by obeying them.— Quietness and peace flourish where reason and justice govern; and true quietness reigneth where modesty directeth.

READING.

Read, not to contradict and confute; not to believe, and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider.—*Lord Bacon.*

SELF-CULTURE.

Have courage enough to review your own conduct; to condemn it where you detect your faults; to amend it to the best of your ability; to make good resolves for your future guidance, and to keep them.

TEMPER.

A cheerful temper, joined with innocence, will make beauty attractive, knowledge delightful, and wit good-natured. It will lighten sickness, poverty, and affliction, convert ignorance into an amiable simplicity, and render deformity itself agreeable.—*Addison.*

USEFULNESS.

Usefulness is confined to no station; and it is astonishing how much good may be done, and what may be effected by limited means, united with benevolence of heart and activity of mind.

VIRTUE.

Virtue is not to be considered in the light of mere innocence, or abstaining from harm, but as the exertion of our faculties in doing good.—*Bishop Butler.*

WORSHIP.

First worship God: he that forgets to pray,
Bids not himself good morrow nor good day.
—*Thomas Randolph.*

XERXES.

It is said of Xerxes, that when he stood upon a hill, and saw the whole country round him covered with his army, he burst into tears, to think that not one of that multitude would be alive a hundred years after.

YOUTH.

Youth is the golden period of life; and every well-spent moment will be like good seed planted in an auspicious season.

ZEAL.

Zeal for the public good is the characteristic of a man of honour and a gentleman, and must take the place of pleasures, profits, and all other private gratifications. Whoever wants this motive is an open enemy, or an inglorious neuter to mankind, in proportion to the misapplied advantages with which nature and fortune have blessed him.

LIVE FOR A PURPOSE.

God had an object in creating us.— Every man and woman should seek to know and try to accomplish that end.— Paul was no sooner converted than he asked, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

Early press it on the minds of your children—engrave it on your own hearts. *A purpose.* There is a purpose which God had in view in giving me a place here. What can it be? How can I perform it?

We must glorify him here. Our bodies, our souls, are his, to be used in honouring him. This will require active usefulness. We must try to be useful. Do not be drones. Do not be destructive, in principle or practice. If you cannot be as salt, purifying by your influence those with whom you come in contact, take heed that you do not contaminate others.

Try to realise every day that you have something to do for God, the souls of men, your own soul, for eternity. Be in earnest about it. "How am I straightened until it be accomplished!" was the language of the Saviour. By constantly, daily urging on in any work, we can do an amount which we would not believe. Do not wait for opportunities. Seek them. If you cannot do what you would, do what you can.

Do not regulate your duty by your success, or the object of your aim, and do not be discouraged because you do not succeed in your wishes. It might do you injury to accomplish what you want, and defeat what God would have you do.—

God will use your endeavour to do his own will and purpose, which will be far better; and if you could only see a little further, it is the very thing you would like to see done. As God overrules all the actions of wicked men, and accomplishes undesigned good, so we may confidently hope and believe that he will use the actions of those who seek to do his will more certainly to do good.

The man who cuts down a forest, and clears the way for another to sow, really feels that he has not attained his object; but he has done his work. So the man that sows—he may not reap. The man who plants the flag on a fort may die in the attempt, but the flag will float to the joy of the conqueror. So the missionary, who tells the heathen of Jesus Christ and his salvation, may never see a convert; but the knowledge which he has communicated may be the means of converting the whole nation to Christ.

If you have never realised the idea before, try to get it into your mind, and *have a purpose*. See that it is worthy of your energy and zeal, then *live for it*.—Seek grace and strength to pursue it, and persevere in it until the Master calls you.

NECESSITY OF CHRISTIAN ZEAL.

A traveller was crossing mountain heights, amidst almost untrodden snows. Warning had been given him, that if slumber pressed down his weary eyelids, they would inevitably be sealed in death. For a time, he went bravely on his dreary path; but with the deepening shade and freezing blast of night, there fell a weight upon his brain and eyes, which seemed to be irresistible. In vain he tried to reason with himself, in vain he exerted his utmost energies to shake off that fatal heaviness.

At this crisis of his fate, he found a fellow-traveller lying across his path at the point of death, half buried beneath a fresh drift of snow. Moved with pity, he took his fallen brother in his arms, and chafed his temples, and hands, and chest, and he also breathed upon the stiff, cold lips the warm breath of his own living body, and pressed the silent heart to the beating pulse of his own. The effort to save another caused the life blood to flow more

freely, and restored warmth and energy to his own chilled frame. He saved his brother, and was himself saved by the very effort which he made.

CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

The wife of Jonathan Edwards was almost as eminent in her sphere as her distinguished husband in his. She was a model housekeeper, full of energy, faculty, and thrift, and taking the entire burden off her studious companion. She attended to all purchases, assumed the management of the children, and kept the house in perfect order. She was also an insatiate reader, devouring and digesting the most abstruse theology, as well as entertaining volumes, and able to discuss the profoundest topics with an acumen which commanded the respect and tasked the powers of her husband in his best moods. She was eminently pious, as may be inferred from a record of her experience in 1742, when she attained, as she thought, to the full assurance of faith. She gives a glowing account of her experience:—

I cannot find language to express how certain the everlasting love of God appeared; the everlasting mountains and hills were but shadows to it. My safety and happiness, and eternal enjoyment of God's immutable love, seemed as durable and unchangeable as God Himself. Melted and overcome by the sweetness of this assurance, I fell into a great flow of tears, and could not forbear weeping aloud. The presence of God was so near, and so real, that I scarcely seemed conscious of anything else. I seemed to be taken under the care and charge of my God and Saviour in an inexpressibly endearing manner. The peace and happiness which I thereafter felt were altogether inexpressible. The whole world, with all its enjoyments and all its troubles, seemed to be nothing; My God was my all and my only portion. No possible suffering appeared to be worth regarding; all persecutions and torments were a mere nothing.

At night, my soul seemed to be filled with an inexpressibly sweet and pure love to God, and to the children of God; with a refreshing consolation and solace of soul, which made me willing to lie on the earth at the feet of the servants of God, to declare His

gracious dealings with me, and to breathe before them my love, and gratitude, and praise.

All night I continued in a constant, clear, and lively sense of the heavenly sweetness of Christ's excellent and transcendent love, of His nearness to me, and of my nearness to Him, with an inexpressibly sweet calmness of soul in an entire rest in Him. I seemed to myself to perceive a flow of divine love come down from the heart of Christ in heaven into my heart, in a constant flowing and reflowing of heavenly and divine love from Christ's heart to mine; and I appeared to myself to float or swim in these bright, sweet beams of the love of Christ, like the notes swimming in the beams of the sun. My soul remained in a heavenly elysium. I think what I felt each minute, during the continuance of the whole time, was worth more than all the outward comfort and pleasure which I had enjoyed in my life put together. It was a sweetness which my soul was lost in.

In the house of God, so conscious was I of the joyful presence of the Holy Spirit, that I could scarcely refrain from leaping with transports of joy. My soul was filled and overwhelmed with light, and love, and joy in the Holy Ghost, and seemed just ready to go away from the body. I had, in the meantime, an overwhelming sense of the glory of God, which was even sweeter than what preceded it. My mind remained so much in a similar frame for more than a week, that I could never think of it without an inexpressible sweetness in my soul.

PSALM-SINGING

As Gotthold was one day passing a tradesman's house, he heard the note of a psalm, with which the family were concluding their morning meal. He was deeply affected, and, with a full heart, said to himself: O my God, how pleasing to my ears is the sound of Thy praise, and how comforting to my soul the thought that there are still a few who bless Thee for Thy goodness! Alas the great bulk of mankind have become brutalized, and resemble the swine, which in harvest gather and fatten upon the acorns beneath the oak,

but show to the tree on which these grew no other thanks than rubbing off the bark, and tearing up the sod around it. In former times, it was a law in certain monasteries that the chanting of God's praise should know no interruption, and that one choir of monks should, at stated intervals, relieve another in this holy employment. To the superstition and trust in human works, of which there may have been here a mixture, we justly assign a place among the wood, hay, and stubble (1 Cor. iii. 12.) At the same time, O God, it is undeniably right that Thy praise should never cease; and were men to be silent, the very stones would cry out. We must begin eternal life here below, not only in our conscience, but also with our praise. Our soul ought to be like a flower, and not merely receive the gentle influence of heaven, but also, in its turn, and as if from gratitude, exhale a sweet and pleasant perfume. We should desire, as once a pious man did, that our hearts would melt and dissolve like incense in the fire of love, and yield the sweet fragrance of praise; or we should feel like the holy martyr who professed himself willing to be consumed, provided that from his ashes a little flower might spring and blossom to the glory of God. We should be ready to give our very blood to fertilize the garden of the Church, and render it more productive of the fruit of praise.

Well, then, my God, I will praise and extol Thee with heart and mouth, to the utmost of my power. O that, without the interruptions which eating, drinking, and sleep require, I could apply myself to this my heavenly calling! Every mouthful of air which I inhale is mixed with Thy goodness which preserves my life; let every breath which I exhale be mingled at least with a hearty desire for Thy honour and praise.

Hallelujah! ye holy angels, ye children of men, and all ye creatures, praise the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together!—*Gotthold's Emblems.*

Sabbath School Lessons.

April 12th.

THE SPIES.—Numb. xiii. 17-33.

The children of Israel, the second year after leaving Egypt, had reached Kadesh-barnea, a town in the wilderness at the south of Canaan. From this place they proposed to send twelve spies to examine the country, and the Lord approved of the proposal. See Deut. i. 22.

Moses directed them as to the route they were to take. They were to enter the land at the south and pass through it. They were on their return to report of the people and their habits, and of the nation and production of the land. At the time they made their visit, the land must have been clothed in its richest verdure. It would be in its highest state of beauty when the first grapes were ripe.

THEIR JOURNEY.

They went from the wilderness of Zin unto Rehob, at the northern boundary of Canaan, near Lebanon, about 150 miles from Kadesh. They came to Hebron. Hebron was the place where their fathers were buried. It had been the residence of Abraham and Jacob.—See Gen. xiii. 18. xxxvii. 14. Eschol was near Hebron, and is still celebrated for its grapes. When they came there they cut down what must have been a very large cluster of grapes.

THEIR RETURN

Must have been eagerly expected by the people. Considerable excitement must have prevailed in the camp on their arrival. The report of the land which they gave was all that could be desired. They said that it was very good. It was flowing with milk and honey, what a beautiful and powerful metaphor. The abundance of milk indicates that it was a place of pastures, flocks and herds.—The abundance of honey suggests a land luxuriant with flowers. *Nevertheless* there was a drawback. The people were *strong*. The cities were *walled*. Israel was a nation unaccustomed to war, and quite unable to carry on a seige operation. The people were evidently quite disappointed. A controversy arose among the spies themselves. Caleb and Joshua urged an immediate attack, and the other ten dwelt exclusively on the difficulties that lay in their way.

Learn. 1. *The Canaan which these spies saw is an emblem of the Heavenly Canaan, to which all Christians look.* God has prepared it for those who trust and obey him; 1 Cor. 2. 9. In it there is no sickness, no sorrow, no sin. It is said to be a home, a temple, a

city, a place prepared by Christ. It is being ever with the Lord.

2. *We should often think of heaven.* We should think of its beauty, think of its joy, think of its holiness, think of it as our fathers' home, as the place where Christ is, and where all the good will one day be.

We should fight for heaven. It is worth fighting for. Many who expect to go to heaven, never fight for heaven. They never fight against their own lusts, tempers, or wickedness around them, they go floating down, the stream, sailing along with its current.—The Christian has many enemies. He has enemies within and enemies without; Eph. vi. 12. Christ is our leader. The gate is strait, the way is *narrow*, but it leads to God. We must strive to enter in at the straight gate, and fight against every thing that would interfere with our entering it.

4. *We should beware of unbelief.* It was this shut Israel out of heaven; Ps. xcvi. 11. Trust God, follow Jesus, and heaven is sure; John xiv. 2, 3. Unbelief can shut you out, "only believe" Numb. v. 36.

April 19th, 1863.

THE PHARISAIC TRADITIONS.—

MARK VII. 1-23.

I.—THE PHARISEES FIND FAULT.

The Pharisees laid great stress upon outward rites and ceremonies. Their principal motive in making a profession of religion seems to have been to gain the applause and respect of the multitude.

Unwashed hands. The Pharisees performed these ablutions of their hands and utensils much more frequently than they were required to do by the Mosaic law. They, therefore, esteemed themselves highly for strictness in religion, and their hearts were filled with self-righteousness. *Tradition of the elders.*—Superstitious practices, which had been introduced by their forefathers, and which were not authorized by the word of God.

II.—OUR SAVIOUR ANSWERS THEM.

Hypocrites. Well did they deserve the name for with all their high-sounding profession, their principles were evil, and their practice immoral. *It is a gift.* Consecrated to God. Under this pretence they excused themselves from supporting their parents, and broke the fifth commandment.

III.—WHAT IT IS THAT DEFILES A MAN.

Nothing from without can defile. This was in direct opposition to the teaching of the Pharisees whose religion wholly consisted in outward things, in formal prayers, in external

cleansings, in abstinence from meats, &c.—Our Saviour shows that all sin proceeded from the corrupt heart within, and until it was cleansed nothing could issue from man but impure thoughts, words, and actions.

LEARN 1. *That it is dangerous to introduce anything into the service of God, however innocent in appearance, which he has not commanded.* By their innovations, the Pharisees had rendered the word of God of none effect. And there have been those in all ages, who have corrupted the truth by the substitution of human for divine ordinances.

2. *That outward worship will avail nothing.* The observance of rites and ceremonies will never recommend us to God.—God requires sincere heart worship. Going to Church, reading the Bible, and prayer, though commendable in themselves, are not all that God requires.

3. *That God's commandments are all in harmony with one another.* We can never plead the observance of one law as an excuse for the breach of another.

4. *That it is one of our highest privileges and duties to support our parents, or other near relatives, when they cannot help themselves.* Those that neglect to do so make the word of God of none effect, and are both Pharisees and hypocrites; 1 Tim. v. 8.

5. *That the heart is desperately wicked.* What a fearful picture we have of it here.—The Spirit of God alone can cleanse it; Psa. li. 10.

AN EXCEPTIONAL TRADE.

It is worthy of remark how many exceptions attach themselves to the use, treatment, traffic in, and defence of, alcoholic products. This idea first crossed our mind when, in passing down a wide public thoroughfare on the other side of Blackfriars Bridge, a Sunday or two ago, we were struck with seeing a small draper's shop open, as to its door and most of its shutters; with its average amount of display, in coarse and homely wares, inviting the attention of customers, though no indication of any such visitants was apparent. An exclamation of astonished disgust escaped our companion, in which we had well nigh joined—oblivious, it should seem, of the fact that both the next door and opposite neighbours of the lawless draper were not only open, to all intents and purposes, but were doing a thriving trade, as the ceaseless swing of their easy-going doors to and fro did not fail to testify.—

The incongruity of the thing could hardly fail to strike even the most casual observer; yet to such an extent does custom influence our very sense of consistency, that the fact of the humble draper's shop, with its grey woollen socks and flannel shirts, its coarse aprons and blue handkerchiefs, its many articles for use and comfort displayed, gave a shock to the susceptibilities of my friend, which the glaring gin-shop and busy public-house had failed to inflict.

Some attempt at a reason for this was upon his lips—the “necessity” of the case, an “article of diet in daily requirement”—when he suddenly stopped, as the reminiscence of a little incident arose to his mind, which we had chanced upon in company on a like occasion, and not far from the same neighbourhood: a woman standing outside a baker's shop, in the winter afternoon, dismay and grief conflicting in her countenance, turning, as she went dinnerless home, to make a last appeal to the barred and bolted door, which turned only a deaf and dumb blank countenance to her earnest vociferations. That door, those bolts and bars, stood between her and the dinner she had prepared for herself and her children, one of whom was ill; and the few minutes delay caused by attending to him had cost the poor family their dinner. No more moved than the panels of his own door by her appeals, the baker made no sign. He might have been making the most of his Sunday leisure, and have quitted the house; but this was asserted not to be the case by a neighbour, who added, for the comfort of the hungry applicant, “It's against the law; they'd fine him if he opened to give it you now. You'll get it first thing to-morrow morning!” With this consolation the poor mother returned to her expectant tribe of little ones. Before, beside, and around, public-houses, taverns, gin-shops, carry on their noisy trade in perfect immunity; yet the joint of meat, the pudding, and potatoes, composing the dinner of a whole family, are forfeited for that day if they be not fetched away before the striking of the clock, the closing of the baker's door. Is this consistent? We will not be misunderstood. So far from us is the desire to increase the facilities for trading on the Sabbath, that we would gladly see even the most stringent measures

adopted which are within the resources of a nation's law-makers, to preserve in all its entirety that precious gift of the one day's rest. We would have no paltering with the duties, no abbreviation of the hours, no diminution in the sacred observances of the Sabbath; its repose should be unbroken, its sanctity secured alike to master and man; to the cattle in the stall and the horse in the stable; to all and every class and grade of men, hand or brain labourers, and traders of every degree and kind, as to manufactures of whatsoever article, be it for ornament or use; but we would have consistency. The mandate which forbids the toil at the baker's oven should apply to the barman, potboy, publican, and malster: "*Thou shalt do no kind of work.*" Let the command be obeyed to the letter, as in the spirit, by the calling which is now made exceptional, and we shall at once realise more nearly than we are now permitted to do, the blessed boon of that day on which we rest from past labours, and prepare us for the day to come.

DO YOU PRAY ?

David did. His circumstances were indeed unfavourable. A crown was upon his head.—The care of a kingdom pressed him. He might have said, 'I have no time.' But he prayed. He prayed much. Prayer formed one of his most influential habits. What proofs and illustrations abound in those wonderful writings, the Psalms! How touching, earnest, often sublime, were his cries unto God!

Daniel did. He was indeed a statesman and courtier. He lived in the midst of idolaters. To them his religion was offensive.—The king bade him not to pray unto the Lord, if he did, it was at mortal peril. The great men of Babylon conspired to make this very thing the means of his ruin. Still he prayed. He did it, not ostentatiously, but without concealment. His religious principle was stronger than his fear of men. 'Three times a day he kneeled, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as aforetime.'—Reader, do you pray?

Paul did. It was the first pulse and expression of his new life in Christ.—'Behold he prayeth!' said the Spirit. The

fact was the surpassing, but conclusive proof of his spiritual change. From being Saul the persecutor, it was shown he had become Paul the saint. However after that event, his life was one of prayer, as well as heroic labour; of prayer for himself, for his countrymen, for the Gentile world, for the blood-bought Church. Holier, more intense, sublimer aspirations probably never ascended from a soul on this side of heaven. Reader, do you pray?

Our Lord Jesus Christ did. This is a most impressive truth. It ought to be pondered by all who do not pray. The Saviour was perfect. He was divine. He sustained no relations of dependence. He had no sins to be forgiven. There were in him no evil passions to be subdued.—He was subject to no temptation that he could not resist. He was assailed by no enemy whom he could not conquer. He had life in himself. He had creative power. He had infinite merit. But he prayed.—He prayed in earnest, and with his disciples—

Gold mountains and the midnight air
Witnessed the fervor of his prayer.

Yes; David, Daniel, Paul, our Lord Jesus Christ, all prayed. The prophets and the saints were men of prayer. Even God, who made man, prayed. Do you pray? If not, will you begin to-day? Soon it may be of no use.

A LITTLE CHILD'S NOTION OF HEAVEN.

A TRUE STORY.

"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child."—1 Cor. xiii. 11.

The glowing sun of a midsummer afternoon poured through the curtainless windows of the little village school, and small curly heads drooped like delicate flowers in the languid air. Among them all, little Katie's sunny ringlets fell the lowest; and if you had lifted the golden veil, you would have seen that the weary eyes had forgotten to con the long line of hard words in the worn spelling book, and that the silken fringes of the drooping lids were resting upon the sweetest little cheeks in the world.

In the warm air, soothed by the drone of the flies, and the hum of young voices, Katie had fallen asleep. She was dream-

ing, too. She was dreaming of her little brother, Charley, who in the bright spring time, when the violets were just opening their sweet blue eyes after their long sleep, had strayed away from earth, and passed through those gates of glory always open for the entering of little feet; and she dreamed that she clasped him to her lonely heart, and begged him never to leave her again. Amid the greatness of her joy, she sobbed aloud, and started to find Belle's soft arm around her, and to hear her whisper—

"What is the matter, darling?"

Before poor Katie could well collect her thoughts to answer, the school was dismissed, and she heard the teacher exclaim, as he pointed to the darkening west, "Hurry home, children, or you will be caught in the shower."

Then Katie poured into the sympathising ear of her little friend all her troubles, and finished by saying, "I could not bear to find it only a dream; I feel as if I must see Charley once more."

"Where do you think he is?"

"In heaven, I hope," replied Katie, "and mother says he cannot come back to us, but we can get to him some time;" and her sobs broke out afresh.

"Why don't you go to him now?" cried Belle.

"I don't know the way," said Katie; "I was very sick when they took him away in the little coffin, and I don't know where they went."

"Are you sure they went to heaven?" asked Belle, eagerly.

"Oh! I know it," said Katie.

"Then," said impulsive little Belle, "then I can show you the way; I saw where they put your little brother." The glad light in Katie's tearful eyes was beautiful to behold.

"Will you show me, Belle? will you show me this very afternoon?"

"Yes, indeed," cried Belle, and with clasped hands, unmindful of the gathering gloom, these little pilgrims set forth on their journey to what they were pleased to call heaven.

Once on the way, a doubt oppressed little Belle.

"Oh!" said Katie, with sweet assurance, "how Charley would run to open the door!" and her cheek flushed with anticipation.

"Do you suppose Charley is very happy?" urged Belle.

"Very," said Katie, emphatically.

"And what does he do all the time?"

"Plays with the angels," cried Katie, with great animation. "And they pick up stars that lie all over the floor of heaven. And the rainbows—I suppose they keep them up all the summer; and, oh! Charley used to love rainbows. He once cried because——"

"Dear me!" said Belle, interrupting her in great dismay, "it rains, Katie, and we are ever so far from home. What shall we do?"

"But we are very near to heaven, ain't we? Let us hurry and go in there."

"Yes," said Belle, "I see the door."

"Where? where?" cried Katie, breathlessly.

"There?" responded little Belle, pointing to the little rising ground and iron door in the village churchyard vault.

"Oh!" faltered Katie, with disappointment; "is that heaven? O Belle! it is like a great cave!" and her little lip quivered sadly.

"Why," said Belle, "that is where they took your brother—the very place—and you said he had gone to heaven; besides," continued she, brightening, "when we get through the little dark door, it may be all bright and beautiful on the other side."

"Perhaps it is," said Katie, more hopefully.

But now the large rain-drops began to fall very fast, and a thunder-storm in all its sublimity burst upon the little travellers. Still the little children, with clasped hands and pale lips, pressed on, and their angels, who "do always behold the face of our Father," watched over them as they walked.

At last, the tiny pattering feet reached the gloomy entrance, and Katie's sweet, hopeful lips were pressed close to the cold door.

"Knock," cried Belle; and, a hollow echo was all her reply.

"Charley! dear Charley! it is your sister—your sister Katie; won't you open the door?"

"He does not hear you, Katie, it thunders so," said Belle; "let us wait a little while." And they waited. Soon there was a lull in the storm, and again Katie,

strong in her affection, knocked at the dreary door, and her loving cry, "Charley! dear Charley!" echoed sadly back.

"Do you hear anything?" asked Belle, with parted lips. "Is he coming?"

"No," replied Katie; "I thought I once heard his little feet, but it was only the rain."

"Perhaps," suggested Belle, with large and eager eyes, "perhaps he is playing with the angels, a great way off, in a beautiful garden."

"Oh!" sobbed Katie; "I hope he will not love the little angels more than me."

"Knock once more—just once," whispered Belle.

Again the little soft hand pleaded for entrance, and the tremulous voice cried piteously—

"Charley! darling, dear brother! please open the door to Katie. Don't love the little angels better than me. O Charley! Charley!"

She threw herself upon the wet ground, and sobbed in an agony of grief and disappointment.

"Katie," said Belle, half frightened at this outburst, "let us go home now, and come again to-morrow, and try."

"No," said Katie, with touching hopelessness; "I shall never come again. Let us go."

She rose without another sob, or fresh tear even, upon the wet cheek; but the grieved expression of the sweet, childish countenance was pitiful to behold. Back again over the dreary way went Katie and Belle. Little shoes wet, little dresses dripping, little heads bent like dew-laden flowers, little hearts very heavy.

At Katie's door stood her anxious mother, peering through shadows for her darling. The child sprang forward, and with one cry, that spoke all the agony of bitter doubt that had crept into her young, confiding heart, exclaimed—

"O mother! I have been knocking at the door of heaven, and Charley would not let me in."

The mother soothed the poor child's sorrow, and comforted her with the assurance that one day they should meet in heaven, and never part again. She told her that the gate of heaven was not in the graveyard, but beyond the skies; that pilgrims to the heavenly city must seek in

prayer the guide which God alone could give to bring them safely on their way to that blessed home; that God's Holy Spirit was that guide, sent down by God to teach and comfort those who sought his face; and that all who asked received this holy guidance, and were at last brought safely home to heaven.

And Katie, to whom at first all this was a great mystery, saw it at length, and cried out joyfully, "Mother, I see my way! Charley is not in the dark grave, but yonder in the bright sky; and there, when I am dead, I shall see him, and be with him for ever!"

Katie never again went to look for her brother in the graveyard; she knew that he was in heaven, and that thought was always with her throughout a long, long life. She never was heard to mention the visit to the grave until her own hour for departure came; then, with a light, not of the world; in her face, she cried out in her childish words, "Charley! dear Charley! it is your sister; open the door!"

DUBLIN.

It had been long felt and deplored among the best friends of Ireland that the intelligence derived from the reading of good books was sadly wanting among the people. On the rolls of the National Schools there are the names of *one-seventh* of the population, and this does not include great numbers who are being taught by other instrumentalities. The increasing capacity to read demands literature of some kind, and it had been sad indeed if there had not been provided that which contains the bread of life. Four years ago the Bible and Colportage Society entered on its work without much material encouragement. It issued, in 1859, 14,605 publications. In 1860 they increased to 21,563. With 1861 they rose to 130,718, which the last year has nearly trebled, the number being 344,038, realizing the sum of £1873, and amounting to as much as was accomplished in the three previous years. The mode of operation is very simple. The society does not publish, but avails itself of the literature produced in London, Edinburgh, Stirling, Dublin, Belfast, and elsewhere. It goes into the market, and purchases in the ordinary way of business, and then distributes Bibles, books, and serials over the country by book-agents and colporteurs. The book-agents are usually employed in other business, having shops, post-offices, and so forth; the colporteurs give themselves

to the work of evangelization, reading, conversing, and praying with the people as they have opportunity, besides gratuitously distributing thousands of tracts. One of the most interesting efforts of the society has been made in "public works;" as large mills, foundries, &c., where some one in authority has taken an interest in the movement. The people pay for the publications, so that the fair presumption is that they value and will make use of them.

The society has been wisely directed by the Rev. Dr. McCosh and the Rev. L. E. Berkeley, whose plans have been energetically worked out by Mr. Dewar. Ireland has been laid under obligation to John Henderson, Esq., of Park, for his generous aid in this growing work. We observe, too, with pleasure, that George Martin, Esq., of Glasgow, has offered £5 each towards the maintenance of new colporteurs in connection with the society, owing to which stimulus sixteen have been added to this class of the society's agents.

Encouraged by the success attending this mode of operations in Ulster, a branch has been opened in Dublin under the care of a local committee, by whom an effective agent, trained and habituated to this work in Glasgow, has been engaged, and vigorous efforts are being made to open up Munster and Connaught, in which provinces, though the Protestant population is relatively small, it embraces a large proportion of very intelligent and cultivated people. It is earnestly hoped that a third co-ordinate branch will be founded in Londonderry, and that, through the divine blessing, healing leaves will be disseminated in greatly increased numbers throughout the nation.

Some years ago the decreasing number of candidates for the ministry created much anxiety in one section of the church, and was made the subject of special preaching, humiliation, and solemn prayer, by the appointment of the General Assembly. The result has been encouraging. An increasing supply of young men of high character has justified those who opposed the lowering of the educational standard. A similar alarm is now being felt in the other sections of the Protestant church, and the result is the agitation of the question of ministerial maintenance—some proposing the re-distribution of the emoluments, and others the greater liberality of the people. In any event, let us hope the churches will endeavour to keep up the standard, mental and moral, of qualification for the work of the ministry. When an educated infidelity is directing science against revealed truth, it is all the more necessary to have godly men in the pulpit, able to unravel the web of sophistry, and guide the inquiries of the young

and thoughtful. How earnestly should Christian people pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers!

While the ordinary means of grace are being extended throughout the country, and here and there extraordinary efforts are being made, as by lay-preaching, we fear there is some distraction of the public mind by the cry of distress raised very generally over the country. The harvest was undoubtedly bad, and some kinds of employment have been scarce; and unhappily there has always been a considerable population in Ireland only a few degrees above pauperism at any time.—The idea of provident forethought never enters the mind of these people. We fear that this class of the community is being educated into, not self-reliance, but dependence. The Roman Catholic authorities, dissatisfied with the present poor-law, exaggerate the distress. It is an unpopular task to obstruct the flow of charity to the poor. Protestants cannot be behind-hand, when Roman Catholics are stirring, and so we fear an unhealthy and demoralizing almsgiving—very foreign to the genius of true Protestantism—is being established as an institution throughout the land. We seem to want the apostolic counsel established in the popular mind, "Let him work with his hands the thing which is good." It will be a sad day for the community when it consists of two classes, the indiscriminate givers, and the dependent and idle receivers. No man really befriends the poor when teaching that the bread of charity is sweeter than the bread of honest toil. We know of no readier plan for corrupting and degrading the population than by training them to feel that it is honourable and every way proper to claim public relief, when self-denial and extra effort are demanded by peculiar emergencies. A people so taught will never battle for freedom, never resist mis-rule, never maintain healthy institutions, never rise in moral or spiritual excellence.

HUMILITY.—There are some persons—good people, too—who appear to think themselves judges, upon all occasions, of the actions of others, whereas they may not have the capability or the opportunity of ascertaining the motives by which others are actuated. It is surprising how ignorant man is of himself. Often when he is condemning another he is himself the guilty man. All need watchfulness, especially those who are gifted with the talent of spying out the faults of others; a desirable gift when well used, requiring great humility in those with whom it is placed.