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A GOSPEL WITHIN THE GOSPEL.

AN EXPOSITION OF LUKE XV. 11-32.

By Rev. William McKenzie, Ramsay, C.W.

(Continued from page 202.)

PART II.—REPENTANCE.

This part of the history opens with the significant words, "*When he came to himself.*" But what a long-continued persistence in his apostacy had gone before! How many expedients he had tried to save himself from this resort! The voice within had begun to plead with him when first he began to be in want; but he was not then willing to listen. In his own evil and foolish way he sought relief. He drew closer his connection with those among whom he had gone to dwell: he sought their help—"he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country." The false help only brought him into a lower deep of want and misery, adding to them the degradation of a vile servitude. Not until he fell to the point of utter destitution, and had been left in cold neglect, to perish, did he go that better way into himself, and begin to commune with his own heart. Here we discern

THE BEGINNING OF REPENTANCE.

For now, the long-neglected, and overpowered voice within makes itself heard—"When he came to himself, he said. How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger." He speaks of the Father as "my father," and the remembrance of him, and of his home, come back to his soul. No doubt, he had with a heartless and sinful selfishness forsaken that home. But now, when busy memory recalls to mind the peace and plenty of that dwelling, in contrast to the want and degradation of the land of famine, with a wistful longing his heart inclines homewards. There is enough there, and to spare, he thinks:

and yet "I perish with hunger." He thinks on what he was, and is. There is a deep meaning in that significant I—and I perish; I a son, the son of such a father. It is a backward glance over all his past life; and, by a remembrance not yet dead within him, he realizes his position as an apostate son. Previous to this he had been out of himself, deceived and deluded by sin, with no knowledge of himself in the simple truth of his condition and relations. But now, when he came to himself, he saw what he might have been, what he ought to be, and what he was. He now knew that he was a son, though an apostate son. The awakened remembrance of his father, and of home, and the significant utterance of his heart wrung forth by the extremity of his misery, and I, his son, perish with hunger—were the indications of a return to that self-knowledge which lies at the basis of true repentance.

But reader, have you attained to this self-knowledge? Have you ever, in council with you own heart sought to know your true condition? Have you ever thus come to yourself? How long many are in doing this! With the most perverse ingenuity, they invent expedients to save themselves from the necessity of this resort. They give themselves no time to reflect. They fill up every precious hour with one or another vanity. They cultivate a close and yet closer connection with the world! They widen the circle of their companionships; they plunge madly into the vortex of worldly business and pleasure—all to save them from themselves, to drown that voice within which cannot make itself heard amid the turmoil,—all to prevent their being left

alone with that soul which they are thus bereaving of life. Sometimes it would seem that men must go on to the most shameful excess of sin, before they can come to know that it is sin. Sometimes by means of outward misery and disgrace, the iron must enter into their very soul, before they come to know that the service of sin is *slavery*. Sometimes it is not until they have sought their help and consolation in the world, by a course of the profoundest and most humiliating devotion to it, that they find out its emptiness, and their own misery in having nothing better to trust in. It is often long, very long, before men come to themselves.

O reader,—you who are going on in such a course of self-forgetfulness,—you, who give yourself no time to commune with your own heart—what madness is this? Are you to find happiness by forgetting what you really are, and ought to be?—Is your soul to be satisfied while all its true necessities are cruelly neglected?—Are you to find peace amid all that noise and turmoil wherewith you drown the voice of conscience? It is mere infatuation. O come back to yourself. Seek some quiet place where you can commune with your own heart, where you can hear the inward voice which tells you that you are a son, though an apostate son, and that your true place is in the Father's house, which you have so long forsaken and forgotten. When you once discover that the cause of all the want and misery you have begun to feel lies in this, that you are a *lost* son of God, then your next word may be, "I will arise and go to my Father," as it was with this son in the parable. We now trace

THE PROCESS OF REPENTANCE.

When he 'came to himself,' when the long dormant consciousness of sonship awoke within him, and when he realized his misery

and degradation, these were, in his own mind, straightway connected with his sin. The last word of his self-communing might be paraphrased thus—"I, the son of such a father, *perish* with hunger; I *perish here*, far from him, among strangers; I *perish here* by my own fault in that I chose to leave that home." His heart was now busy with his sin of apostacy, in which he now discovered the true source of all his wretchedness. His resort to earnest reflection had thus been productive of two results—first, The knowledge of himself in the simple truth of his condition and relations; and second, The knowledge, or sense, of his misery and degradation, and of these as the consequences of his sin. And now immediately it begins to bear fruit in outward action—he comes to the *point of resolution*.

Let us try to imagine the scene as depicted here at this point of the history. This son has now come to the extremity of want. Sent into the fields to feed swine, he is left there in neglect to perish with hunger. He is but a young man yet, and, amid all his rags and wretchedness, there is about him a nameless air of nobility which speaks him fit for better things than these. Want and famine have paled his countenance, and emaciated his frame, and he sits down wearily, with drooping head, and downcast eye. The solitude and silence are propitious to thought, and busy memory begins to lead him back through all the windings of his past life. He thinks on his past ways. He tries his past life. As sins and follies pass before him in review, a deep-felt sense of shame overwhelms him: lower, and yet lower droops his head, in utter dejection and despondency. But, suddenly his head is lifted erect, his eye is lighted up with something like a hope; some murmured words fall from his lips, among which you hear, "I will arise." A ray of light and hope has reached his

spirit. He will no longer remain amid the misery and degradation of the land of famine. He will make the attempt to avoid the near ruin now before him. He will do something rather than perish. All dejection and despondency vanish as he stands up, and, with a decisive resolve, which calls for instant action, says—"I will arise and go to my father."

His repentance presses on to its consummation in this resolution to *return*, conjoined with the further resolution to *confess his sin*. He says—"I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son."

It is almost impossible to express the heart-breaking fulness of this single word of confession—"Father, I have sinned." This is the sinner's heart cry in returning to God; his cry to the heart of the all-merciful Father. It springs from the very depths of earnestness, with no abatement of reserve or apology:—like that prayer of the publican in the temple, when he stood afar off, and with thoughts fixed only on himself and God, smote upon his breast, saying, "God be merciful to me *the sinful one*." This son makes no excuse, *in words*, for his sin. He does not bring forward anything to extenuate his guilt. He does not plead his youth and inexperience, or strong temptation or the perverting influence of bad companions, or the evil effect of outward circumstances. Neither does he, *in thought*, excuse himself. Without reserve or apology his heart sends forth the cry of confession,—“Father, I have sinned.” And that single word, so uttered, is enough for Him who searches the heart. The contrite heart, breaking under a sense of innumerable past sins and follies, endures not to wait to array them all in order, but must relieve itself with the piercing cry, Father, I have sinned. That word, uttered unconditionally,

contains the essence of all those words of lowly confession which, in all ages, the Holy Spirit puts into the mouth of God's children when leading them back to Him.

Corresponding to the single word of confession, there is but one aggravation of his sin mentioned. He says, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee.” The seeming separation here, between heaven and the father, sustains the figure in the parable. But, essentially, this word is the same as the psalmist's cry of believing penitence, “Against thee, thee only, have I sinned.” For, the special aggravation of sin, the essence of its malignity, consists in this, that it is an offence *against God*, an attempted injury and dishonour done to Him. Sin may have other aggravations. It may involve grievous wrong to many; it may bring misery and want to the sinner himself, and grief and shame to all, connected with him. He may have bitter sorrow at the sight of its wretched consequences, and profound dread at the thought of his own exposure to the judgment of God because of it, and yet, its real malignity as an offence against the blessed God is a consideration, which, if thought of at all, lies very lightly on his conscience. But there is neither true conviction of sin nor yet true repentance, where this consideration does not stand out above and before every other. And thus when, by the operation of the Holy Spirit, any sinner is convinced of sin, his heart's cry of penitence in turning to God shall be like this, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee.” Then shall the contrite heart be able to appropriate the words of the psalmist, “Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight.” This is the language of that godly sorrow which worketh repentance unto salvation. Alas! for you, reader, if you have not yet learned this by heart; for then, you

can know *only* the sorrow of the world which worketh death.

In addition to his confession of sin, he now alludes, with a timid misgiving, to his deserving: "I am no more worthy to be called *thy son*." And yet how full his heart is of this relationship. Twice over has he already said "father;" and to that father he will speak of himself as "thy son," even though in the same breath with his confession of unworthiness to be called so. His heart feels after reconciliation; with his whole soul he desires to be received back and forgiven. He seems to have a dim hope of it, for what else gave the secret impulse which prompted him to return and confess his sin? He *hopes* to be forgiven, but yet with a *heavy misgiving at heart*, for his words were no mere words of course when he said, "I am *no more worthy* to be called thy son."

Perhaps, reader, you have never known any such misgiving. You have never imagined any difficulty in the matter of your forgiveness by God. You acknowledge, of course, your sin and unworthiness. Well, suppose it true with respect to you that you are "no more worthy to be called a son," on what do you rest your hope of acceptance with God? God is very pitiful, you say. No doubt: but God is very holy. God is very merciful. Yes; but God is infinitely just. And is there no difficulty in reconciling your acceptance with that infinite holiness and justice? Surely you know not *Him with whom you have to do*, if you think lightly of this matter. He cannot err through ignorance: all things are naked and open to Him. He cannot be led astray by the promptings of a weak, unwise love; nor can He be deceived by hypocritical entreaties, and tears, and promises, as an earthly father may. He searches the hearts of the children of men. One way of acceptance with God there is, however, though *but one*, viz., Through Christ, for

His sake. Besides this, there is nothing, *absolutely nothing*, on which a sinner can build any true hope of acceptance. Is it then, dear reader, because you are trusting on Christ with all your heart, that you have no misgivings? Is it because "justified by faith, you have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," that your soul is at rest? We beseech you to see to this matter in time.

This felt difficulty drives the son in the parable to an *old and common expedient*. He saw his sin in all its inexcusable baseness, and his heart was overwhelmed with a keen sense of his unworthiness. And here the difficulty arose. How *could* he be received back? How could *he* look for a son's place at home? The difficulty grows, the longer he considers. O for another trial, he thinks, for an opportunity to prove my penitence, and shew my obedience, and win back favour in time. And so on his return home he purposes to present this request to his father, "Make me as one of thy hired servants." This is his solution of the difficulty. Only put him in a way to merit his support, and, by a course of service and duty, win back in time a son's place. This, as Luther says, "is the torment of all consciences when sin comes and gnaws them: they run hither and thither, seek help here and there, and presume still to do a great deal in order to pay God. A heart that is smitten by the law is humbled indeed, therefore it falls down before the Lord and asks grace; but it has still the fault that it will help itself; this cannot be cast out of nature." This pride of heart exists in every sinner; this self-sufficiency, which cannot be persuaded that its own efforts are not to retrieve the past. It is the yet unsubdued pride of his heart, which leads the sinner, under a sense of his sin, to come to God with a request like this, "make me as one of thy hired servants." But "God's thoughts are not our

thoughts, neither are His ways our ways." God sent His Son to be the Saviour of the world. "He died, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God." For Jesus' sake and without one reproach or upbraiding for all their past sin, God is willing to be reconciled, to receive back His apostate sons and daughters. The sacrifice of His own Son for sinners, is God's solution of this great difficulty. In Christ Jesus we "receive the adoption of sons," a gift divine and free. And it is not presumption, but true humility, to close at once with the divine offer of this free grace.

So far we have traced the internal history of repentance, the process of it in the mind and heart of the sinner. The word which is now added, "And he arose and came to his father," notes

THE CONSUMMATION OF REPENTANCE.

But, reader, possibly we have described your past history; it has reached so far, *without this blessed consummation*. For few, in a land like ours, where God's voice in the gospel follows His lost sons and daughters in all their wanderings, have not, sometime or other, felt the strivings of their higher nature, urging them to arise and return to Him. You remember, in the time of your first great sorrow, when death had broken in on your home circle, or when you were laid down under your first dangerous sickness—you remember, in the solemn quiet of that time, what unwonted thoughts visited your heart, and what sincere resolves were formed, that henceforth you should live as a child of God. Or you remember that special season when the voice of God in a preached gospel spoke to you in power; when it awoke in you the dormant consciousness of sonship; when you got a glimpse of what you were, and might and ought to be; and when, for a while, there were the mo-

tions of better thoughts and desires, the rising up of high resolves in your soul, stemming the tide of ungodliness which had begun to set in. You were once at the point of saying, "I will arise and go to my Father." It may be you even uttered such a resolve. Once you bade fair to take your true place as a son of the Highest. And though, perhaps, that was long ago, yet even now there are within you the remnants of better things, like the flowers of a neglected garden, but the thorns and briars of worldliness and sin are rushing up, and fast usurping all to themselves.

Yés, once it was so with you. But you have begun to be ashamed of early impressions. You try to persuade yourself that they were the follies, or at least the weaknesses of youth, which it becomes you now in manhood to lay aside. Ah! reader, that softness of heart and that facility of impression are precious prerogatives of early life. *Youth* is God's season for special dealing with His lost sons and daughters. And the man who has, during all that season, resisted the strivings of his higher nature, and hardened his heart against the fear of God—the man who has succeeded in beating out of his soul the consciousness of his relation to God, and of his destination to a higher life—that man is at the point of perfecting his everlasting ruin.

But yet, once, there were the beginnings of good within you. Are there not some seeds still left? O reader, where do you now stand? Has the tide of indifference set in and quenched, one by one, ALL those beacon lights of promise which once shone in your soul? Is God your Father still, mourning over you as a *lost child*? still saying, "What shall I do unto thee; for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away?" Has every fair promise in the past proved false and vain? Does your past history indeed

lack that blessed addition, "And he arose and came to his father"? This son said, "I will arise and go to my father;" "and he arose and came;"—the most blessed said and done of which a man is capable. Reader, you may have still the germ of this within you. Surely, you are not content, in heart and soul, amid the want and degradation of the far country? Is there not the dim ember of a desire leading you to God? O that we could now stir up that feeble spark into a flame, so that even this day you might in earnest decision take up this word, "I will arise and go to my Father." And, once more said, let it take instant effect. For, between the *saying* and the *doing* there is often long standing still—often the inroads of irresolution, and change of mind—often, alas! *the sad turning back*. Do not linger, do not hesitate. COME; *only come*, and ye shall be received with the full joy of a father's heart. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon."

"The Unfortunate Gentleman."

This expression occurs in a daily newspaper, in connection with the serious illness of an eminent scholar, divine, and Christian. The paragraph runs thus: "All hopes of recovery have been given up, and the unfortunate gentleman lies on the brink of dissolution." The meaning is that he is unfortunate in being at the "gates of death."

This way of speaking is common, but is it correct? Is it the case that a Christian at any age, or in any circumstances, is in an unfortunate position, when unexpectedly called to die. They may appear to be so in the eyes of unconverted men. To them death is fitly represented as the King of terrors. But to the Christian death is dif-

ferent. It is but the means of taking them to their Father, their Beloved, their home, their inheritance.

Do we ever employ such language when we are unexpectedly called to go "home" to those whom we dearly love,—when we are called to occupy a higher position than we now enjoy—when we are called to possess a wealthy inheritance? Never. We hail such intelligence as good news. We rejoice in the event, and are congratulated by our friends on our fortune.

So is it with the man who dies in Christ, who goes to be for ever with the Lord, and to join in the praises that are at His right hand.

SELF-CONTEMPLATION.

"If a man is to find life, he must find it elsewhere than in a deceitful and sterile view of himself."—*Vinct.*

If you will allow me for once to say what I think (writes Miss Newton, February 2, 1849, to one who was distressing herself about her hardness of heart,) you will find the greatest possible help in studying the character of CHRIST, not your own. Read the Gospels, to trace out—in every miracle, and word, and act, and touch, and in every step of the path he trod—what was his character, and how it developed itself; and I think, with the Spirit's help, you will forget your walk in thinking of his, and your emptiness in his fulness; and thus, by beholding as in the glass the glory of the Lord, you will be "changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Lord the Spirit." I do think that Satan hinders Christians more by discouraging them, with showing them their perpetual shortcomings and failures, and their sad want of conformity to Jesus, with all its sad results, than in any other way; and I cannot help feeling strongly, that in urging self-examination in the way so many good men do, they really aid the mischief. I like what Mr. Cheyne said, "For every look at yourself, take ten looks at Christ;" only I would double and treble it, and almost say, "Never look at self at all!"

I believe that it is when we are most occupied with CHRIST that we are most useful to others, however unconscious we may be of it, and however conscious (as, of course, we shall be more than ever) of our unlikeness to Him.

I cannot find a single instance in which, either in the Gospels or Epistles, Christians are taught, by example or by precept, to make a study of their own hearts.—I cannot help thinking that inward experiences have far too much taken the place of the study of Christ and of the character of God, and that this accounts in a great measure for the low and desponding state of so very many Christians. Do you not think that the constant study of His character would far more effectually teach us our depravity than poring into our own?

—A. L. Newton:

DISTRUST IN PRAYER.

* What profit should we have, if we pray unto him?"—Job xxi. 15.

The great majority of us have little *faith* in prayer. This is one of those causes which may produce a habit of mind in devotion resembling that of impenitent prayer, and yet distinguishable from it, and co-existent, often, with some degree of genuine piety. Christians often have little faith in prayer as a *power in real life*. They do not embrace cordially, in feeling as well as in theory, the truth which underlies the entire scriptural conception and illustration of prayer, that it is literally, actually, positively, effectually, a means of power.

Singular as it may appear, the fact is indisputable, that Christian practice is often at a discount by the side of heathen habits of devotion. Heathen prayer, whatever else it is or is not, is a reality in the heathen idea. A pagan suppliant has faith in prayer, as he understands it. Grovelling as his notion of it is, *such* as it is he *means* it. He trusts it as an instrument of power. He expects to accomplish something by praying.

When Ethelred, the Saxon king of Northumberland, invaded Wales, and was about to give battle to the Britons, he observed near the enemy a host of unarmed men. He inquired who they were, and what they were doing. He was told that they were monks of Bangor, praying for the success of their countrymen. "Then," said the heathen prince, "they have begun the *fight* against us; attack them *first*."

So any unperverted mind will conceive of the scriptural idea of prayer, as that of one of the most downright, sturdy realities in the universe. Right in the heart of God's plan of government it is lodged as a power. Amidst the conflicts which are going on in the evolution of that plan, it stands as a power. Into all the intricacies of divine working and the mysteries of divine decree, it reaches out silently as a power. In the mind of God, we may be assured, the conception of prayer is no fiction, whatever man may think of it.

It has, and God has *determined* that it should have, a positive and an appreciable influence in directing the course of a human life. It is, and God has *purposed*

that it should be, a link of connection between human mind and divine mind, by which, through his infinite condescension, we may actually move his will. It is, and God has *decreed* that it should be, a *power* in the universe, as distinct, as real, as natural, and as uniform, as the power of gravitation, or of light, or of electricity. A man may *use* it as trustingly and as soberly as he would use either of these. It is as truly the dictate of good sense that a man should expect to achieve something by praying, as it is that he should expect to achieve something by a telescope, or the mariner's compass, or the electric telegraph.

This intense practicalness characterizes the scriptural ideal of prayer. The Scriptures make it a reality, and not a reverie. They never bury it in the notion of a poetic or philosophic contemplation of God. They do not merge it in the mental fiction of prayer by action in any other or all other duties of life. They have not concealed the fact of prayer beneath the mystery of prayer. The scriptural utterances on the subject of prayer admit of no such reduction of tone and confusion of sense as men often put forth in imitating them. Up, on the level of inspired thought, *prayer is PRAYER*—a distinct, unique, elemental power in the spiritual universe, as pervasive and as constant as the great occult powers of Nature.

The want of trust in this scriptural ideal of prayer often neutralizes it, even in the experience of a Christian. The result cannot be otherwise. It lies in the nature of mind.

Observe, for a moment, the philosophy of this. Mind is so made, that it needs the hope of *gaining an object*, as an inducement to effort. Even so simple an effort as that involved in the utterance of desire, no man will make persistently, with no hope of gaining an object. Despair of an object is speechless. So, if you wish to enjoy prayer, you must first form to yourself such a theory of prayer—or, if you do not consciously form it, you must *have* it—and then you must cherish such trust in it, as a reality, that you shall feel the force of an object in prayer. No mind can feel that it has an object in praying, except in such degree as it appreciates the scriptural view of prayer as a genuine thing.

Our conviction on this point must be as

definite and as fixed as our trust in the evidence of our senses. It must become as natural to us to obey one as the other. If we suffer our faith to drop down from the lofty conception of prayer as having a lodgment in the very counsels of God, by which the universe is swayed, the plain practicalness of prayer, as the Scriptures teach it, and as prophets and apostles and our Lord himself performed it, drops proportionately; and in that proportion our motive to prayer dwindles. Of necessity, then, our devotions become spiritless. We cannot obey such faith in prayer, with any more heart than a man who is afflicted with double vision can feel in obeying the evidence of his eyes. Our supplications cannot, under the impulse of such a faith, go, as one has expressed it, "in a right line to God." They become circuitous, timid, heartless. They may so degenerate as to be offensive "like the reekings of the Dead Sea."—*Still Hour.*

PROFESSOR PORTER ON GETHSEMANE.

In a series of Family Papers describing visits to holy and historic places in Palestine, Professor Porter refers to Gethsemane—a subject especially appropriate to the present season.

It would appear that our Lord, during His visits to Jerusalem, never spent a night in the city. Sometimes he walked to Bethany, but usually he made the Mount of Olives his home.

That the Son of Man should have His house in a garden; that He should be forced to rest, and sleep, and pray, on the hill side, under the open canopy of heaven—must seem to many passing strange. It looks like a practical commentary on His own touching declaration:—"The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." May we not ask, however, if there was no house in Jerusalem that would shelter, no friend there that would welcome Him? Was not Bethany near? Was there not a home for him in the house of Martha? Why did he not go to Bethany? Those at all familiar with Eastern life will easily understand the whole matter.—Nearly all the inhabitants of Palestine sleep during great part of the year in the open

air, on the house top, or in a garden or field. It is a common thing for families to leave their houses in town or village early in spring, and bivouac under a tree or rude arbour the whole summer. Travellers, when about to spend a few days or weeks at a town or village, generally rent a garden and live there. I have done so myself, and have slept with the earth for a bed, and the starry sky for a canopy. There is no rain, and no dew; the ground is dry, and the fresh balmy air of the country is far preferable to the close, stifling atmosphere of an eastern city. Another thing must not be overlooked. As society is constituted in the East, one can have no privacy in a strange house, night or day. The one apartment in which all the males sit, sleep, and eat, is open to all comers. If we would meditate or pray, we must go, like Peter, to the house top (Acts, x. 9), or like Isaac, to the field (Gen. xxiv. 63), or, like Jesus, to a mountain (Luke vi. 12). Our Lord desired a place where He could be alone with his Father; and he chose the garden of Olivet. Most probably it belonged to some secret friend who placed it at his disposal. Be this as it may, His followers knew it well—"and Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place, for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with His disciples." (John xviii. 2.)

LIVE FOR SOMETHING.

Thousands of men breathe, move, and live—pass off the stage of life, and are heard of no more. Why? None are blessed by them; none could point to them as the means of their redemption: not a line they wrote, not a word they spoke, could be recalled, and so they perished; their light went out in darkness, and they were not remembered more than the insects of yesterday. Will you thus live and die? Live for something. Do good, and leave behind you a monument of virtue that the storms of time can never destroy. Write your name, by kindness, love, and mercy, on the hearts of thousands you come in contact with year by year, and you will never be forgotten. No; your name, your deeds, will be as legible on the hearts you leave behind you, as the stars upon the brow of the evening. Good deeds will shine as brightly on the earth as the stars of heaven.

A NIGHT OF PRAYER.

Not many years ago, in one of our northern cities, a trial took place between a Christian and an infidel. The latter had sued the former for a heavy sum falsely alleging his promise to pay it for some stocks which he claimed to have sold him. The Christian admitted an offer of the stocks, but protested that so far from promising the sum demanded, he had steadily refused to make any trade whatever with the plaintiff. Each of the parties to the suit had a friend who corroborated their assertions. Thus the case went before the jury for decision.

The charge of the judge was stern and significant. "It was a grave and most painful task which devolved upon him to instruct the jurors that one of the parties before them, must be guilty of deliberate and wilful perjury. Their statements were wholly irreconcilable with each other; nay, more, were diametrically opposite; and that either were innocently mistaken in their assertions was impossible.

"Your verdict, gentlemen," he said, in conclusion "must decide upon which side this awful and heaven-daring iniquity belongs. The God of truth help you to find the truth, that the innocent suffer not."

It was late in the day when the judge's charge was given, and the finding of the jury was to be rendered in the morning.— The plaintiff went carelessly from the court arm in arm with the wicked associate whom he had bribed to swear falsely on his behalf. The defendant and his friend walked away together in painful silence.— When the Christian reached his home, he told his family of the judge's solemn charge and of the grave responsibility which rested upon the jurors. "They are to decide which of us has perjured ourselves on this trial," he said; "and how terrible a thing for me if they should be mistaken in their judgment. There is so little of anything tangible for their decision to rest upon, that it seems to me as if a breath might blow it either way. They cannot see our hearts, and I feel as if only God could enable them to discern the truth. Let us spend the evening in prayer that he may give them a clear vision."

The twelve jurymen ate their supper in perplexed silence, and were shut in their room for deliberation and consultation.— "I never sat in such a case before," said the foreman. "The plaintiff and defendant have sworn point-blank against each other; and how are we to tell which speaks the truth I cannot see. I should not like to make a mistake in the matter; it would be a sad affair to convict an innocent man of perjury." Again there was a silence among them, as if each were weighing the case in his own mind. "For myself, I feel as if the truth must be with the defendant; I am constrained to think that he is an honest man. What say you, gentlemen?" Every hand was raised in affirmation of this opinion. They were fully persuaded of its truth, and gave a unanimous verdict accordingly.

Thus the Christian man was rightfully acquitted, and he gave thanks to God with a newer and stronger confidence in the power of prayer. "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me," saith the Lord.

IDOLS PUT TO A GOOD USE.

When Havelock, the noble English soldier, took Rangoon, the capital of Burmah, the first thing he looked for after the city was taken was a fit place for a prayer-meeting.

Where did he find one? There was a famous heathen temple in a retired grove, devoted to the service of Boosh. Havelock secured one of the chambers in it, a large room filled with images of idol gods, sitting all round.

One day an officer, strolling round the temple, thought he heard the sound of English singing: he stopped and listened. It was certainly psalm-singing in the good old English style. He followed the sound, and behold, it led him to an upper chamber, where Havelock, with his Bible and hymn-book before him, surrounded by more than a hundred of his soldiers, was holding a prayer meeting! The room was dark, but every idol had a lamp in his lap, shedding more light than any idols ever did before.

HAVE YOU AN ANCHOR?

Looking out from our upper window this morning we can see a home-bound ship riding gallantly up the bay. She looks weary from a long voyage; and on her bow, as a field-marshal wears a star on his breast, she bears her anchor. It has done good service, and deserves its place of honour on her front. It has been her salvation on many a night of tempest. Though it hangs idle now, beneath her bowsprit, yet more than once when the gale struck her in the open roadstead; or, when off a wild lee shore, the hurricane made hideous music through her cordage, like one immense harp strung to the gales, that anchor was unloosed, and running-out with merry rattle of the chains, it dived straight downward to its resting-place. Upon the bottom of the deep its flukes took brave hold; and while the ship strained on the cable above, the patient flukes stoutly held on below. As soon might she attempt a voyage without a compass to guide her, or without canvas to impel her, as without an anchor to keep her from the devouring rocks or the yawning lee shore. So when she returns in triumph from a campaign with the elements, scarred with collisions of the angry deep, it is fitting that she bear on her bosom, as a trust and a trophy, the good anchor that held her safely.

Voyager to Eternity! have you the "anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast?" It is the Christian hope, Paul tells us. It is the hope in Christ which holds the soul of man as an anchor holds a ship. You cannot have it without knowing it; and if you have it, you will be none the better if you do not use it in the hour of need.

You will need it to keep you from drifting away into scepticism and unbelief. There is no such safeguard against practical infidelity as the possession of a living faith in Jesus. And the secret of so many a lapse into error—of so much veering about with "every wind of false doctrine"—is found in the lack of a well-grounded hope in the inner heart. As soon as the soul begins to swing away into painful doubts—doubts of God, of the truth of his Word, of the mercy of his dealings, of the triumph of his cause, or of the reality of heaven—then let go the anchor to the bottom. Nothing else will hold against that devil of doubt, but a practical faith in the Lord Jesus.

There is a danger to the Christian greater than adversity or persecution of enemies. It is from the stealthy *under-currents* of temptation. An unanchored ship may be lying on waters as smooth as glass, and yet, before the master is aware, his keel is on a rock.—

The invisible tide bore him away so softly and so silently that he did not observe the motion. Had the wind risen he would have taken the alarm; he did not suspect that an under-current was stealthily carrying him away. So are thousands of Christian professors carried on the rocks every day, not with shocks of adversity, but by invisible under-currents. One man insensibly drifts into neglect of prayer, and into laxity of Sabbath observance. Another gets in an under-current of worldliness; it swings him along slowly but surely, until he has lost sight of the light-house on the headland: he is aroused by no sudden shock, but when we look for him where he used to be, and where he ought to be, he is not there. The world got hold of his keel, and his anchor had no hold on Christ. Is not this the secret of by far the larger part of all the backsliding in the Church?

It is not strength of intellect that saves a man, or the surroundings of society, or alliance with a church, or orthodoxy of belief. All these have proved but ropes of sand attached to anchors of straw. They never hold a man when the tide of temptation sets in.—He must have Christian principle, or he is lost. No man is safe in business, or safe in public life, or safe in private morals, when his conscience is unloosed from Christ. When his godly principle gives way, he may float smoothly for a while, but it is a mere question of time, how soon he shall strike and go to the bottom. Remember, God never insures a man, even in the Church, who has no anchor of true religion. And if you ever reach heaven, my friend, you will come in, like yonder vessel, with your anchor at the prow. You will give all the glory then, not to your own skill or your own seamanship, but to the blessed "anchor, sure and steadfast, which entereth into that within the veil."

"There are ships," says the eloquent Melville, "that never will founder in life's battles or go down in life's tempests. There are ships which shall be in no peril when the last hurricane shall sweep earth and sea and sky; and which, when the fury is overpast, and the light that knows no night breaks gloriously forth, shall be found on tranquil and crystal waters, resting beautifully on their shadows. These are they who have trusted in Jesus; these are they who have been anchored upon Christ."—*T. L. Cuyler.*

Take Christ for your hope, his character for your model, his love for your motive, his spirit for your strength, and his promises for your encouragement.

THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL OF
CHRIST.

Reader, mistake not the ground of your justification before God! This is the error of most professors; they mislay their justification, by laying it partly upon *faith* and partly upon their *holiness*. Now, beloved, this is what I would desire the Lord to bring you and me to—to know that we are just men only by the righteousness that is in Christ—that the law is perfectly fulfilled for me by Jesus Christ, and not partly by Him and partly by me, but only and perfectly by Him. Then let me build my justification upon that only, and not upon what I am.

Take heed of that, and let it be built wholly upon Jesus Christ—his death and resurrection—“who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.” He died and rose again, “that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us.” By believing in Jesus, He and we are regarded by God as one; and then whatsoever Christ is or hath is ours. Wherefore, saith the apostle, “the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us.”—He doth not say it is fulfilled in Christ, though that be true; but he takes the boldness to say it is “fulfilled in us,” by virtue of our union with Jesus Christ. So in every true believer the righteousness of the law, through Christ, is perfectly fulfilled.

The weakest and poorest saint hath as perfectly fulfilled the law as the strongest and richest, for Christ is as truly his righteousness. It was because of the righteousness of Christ that Paul could say, and that every believer can say, *I am dead to the law*.—If you are a true believer, you are as thoroughly beyond the condemning power of the law of God as the dead man is from that of his country. The law has no power to condemn Jesus in whom we trust, and it would not be in accordance with justice if it condemned us who trust in Him; for God has said, “He that believeth in Him is not condemned.”

Therefore, if you are a believer in Jesus, you are regarded by God as perfectly just and righteous as if you had never sinned against the law of God—not by your own righteousness, but by the righteousness of Jesus Christ—“The righteousness of the law is fulfilled.” God the Father acknowledgeth that his Son hath satisfied the law, and therefore we are freed.

Dear reader, let me beseech you again to learn from this that your justification (your pardon and your acceptance) is not built upon anything that is in you, or that is done by you, or that you may hope to do hereafter.

You are not justified by your own personal

good, neither are you unjustified by your own personal evil; you are not one jot more just when you have done all the good you can, and you are not one jot the less just when you have committed all the weaknesses, and fallen into all the frailties, that a saint can fall into, because your justification is built only upon Christ, and upon what he did and suffered.

My justification is built upon the death and resurrection of Christ; he hath fulfilled the law, he hath paid the debt, he is out of prison; he is even at the right hand of God, and the Father is satisfied. Here is my justification, and, believing this, I am happy.—*Cradock*.

PRAYER A BUSINESS.

Not a few persons who admit the duty and privilege of prayer fail to recognize its place as a means of success. Prayer is a work; it should be reckoned among the powers of the world as really as muscular or brain work; as strategy or hard fighting. We are prone to go to prayer as a form and to hurry to our business afterward as the reality, whereas prayer is part of the business itself. We complain that our business leaves us no time for prayer, whereas we neglect our business when we omit prayer, as truly as when we omit posting our accounts or withhold the proper amount of manual labor from our tasks. When we fail in business, or when our affairs become vexatious and our work goes behindhand, we can give this or that account of the failure or trouble, but does it occur to us as one of the causes, that we have not used the instrumentality of prayer as we should? When the good cause meets with drawbacks, and rebellion still defies the armies of the nation, how prone are we to search out the cause in the inefficiency of generals, and the stupidity of the combinations, but we too slowly come to the question whether Christian people of the land have been praying as they should.

We ought calmly to reckon prayer as among our daily, most practical, most efficient modes of business. We should set it down as indispensable to success. We should get rid of all that false feeling which regards it as an interruption, and which instigates us to a hurried disposal of it, if in the least degree crowded. That we ought always to spend a long season in prayer, we do not affirm. We know well that the crowding prayer often suffers, is not so much from absolute want of time, as from an under-estimate of the value of prayer, and from a false distinction drawn between it and our daily activity. What we plead for is, that it shall have its fair share of time.

True prayer and prayerful labor cannot well

be distinguished, but are the complements of each other. True prayer encourages, clears, and cheers the mind, and prompts to the highest, noblest, most heroic labor. Only that labor which is steeped in prayer produces living, lasting results. In fact, we reach a right estimate of prayer, when we regard it as the most potent agency in the earth, the mightiest instrument a human arm can wield, when we have faith in it as above all our material and human means, and as reaching and enlisting the energy of Omnipotence.

Let us therefore feel that we have done nothing in any private or public enterprise, if we have not prayed. Let us regard with suspicion, those schemes to which we have hastened and in which we have become absorbed, to the exclusion or the serious hindrance of our prayers. Let us convict ourselves of a serious deficiency in our business principles—if we undervalue, or overlook prayer as a prime agency of success. Let us view the necessity of prayer in the light of common sense, no less than of conscience and religion.—*Am. Presby.*

ETERNITY! O ETERNITY!

Immortal men! are you to spend an eternity in heaven or in hell? and are you losing yourselves among the vanities of this world? Will you never awake? Sleep on then, and take your rest. But know you that the mists of death will soon gather around you. You will be laid upon a dying bed. Time is gone and eternity has come. I see you lying there without a friend to help you in heaven or earth. I see you cast back your eyes on mis-spent Sabbaths—on murdered privileges—on wasted time. You remember the calls you once rejected. I hear your cry, "I had a soul, but prized it not, and now my soul is gone. Ten thousand worlds for one more year?—ten thousand worlds for one more Sabbath in the house of God!"

I look a little farther, and I see the perturbations of the troubled sky. The sign of the Son of Man appears in heaven. The last trumpet sounds. That body which had been committed to the grave is organized afresh. It opens its eyes on the strange commotions of a dissolving world. It is forced to ascend. The judgment-seat is set in the clouds of heaven and the books are opened. I hear you cry to rocks and to mountains to cover you; but rocks and mountains are sunk in the general ruin. The books are opened, and on a black page are spread out all the sins of your life. That page is held up before a frowning universe. The judgment ended, the Judge prepares to speak. God of mercy, save me from that hour! Eternal justice lowers

upon his awful brow. His right hand grasps ten thousand thunders. With a look before which heaven and earth flee away, he turns full upon his foes: "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." But I return, and, blessed be God, I still find myself on praying ground and my dear hearers about me. This is not the judgment day.

But, my beloved reader, I expect soon to meet you at the bar and give an account of my message. It is in full view of that awful scene that I am speaking thus to you. I would not have you perish; but if you perish, I would clear my garments of your blood.

OUR ONE LIFE.

BY DR. BONAR.

'Tis not for man to trifle! Life is brief
And sin is here.
Our age is but the falling of a leaf—
A dropping tear.
We have no time to sport away the hours,
All must be earnest in a world like ours.

Not many lives, but only one have we—
One, only one!
How sacred should that one life ever be—
That narrow span!
Day after day filled up with blessed toil,
Hour after hour still bringing in new spoil.

Our being is no shadow of thin air,
No vacant dream,
No fable of the things that never were,
But only seem.
'Tis full of meaning as of mystery, [sing be.
Though strange and solemn may that mean-

Our sorrows are no phantom of the night,
No idle tale;
No cloud that floats along a sky of light
On summer gale.
They are the true realities of the earth,
Friends and companions even from our birth.

O life below! how brief, and poor, and sad!
One heavy sigh,
O life above! how long, how fair, and glad!
An endless joy.
Oh! to be done with daily dying here;
Oh! to begin the living in yon sphere!

O day of time, how dark! O sky and earth,
How dull your hue!
O day of Christ, how bright! O sky and earth,
Made fair, and new!
Come, better Eden with thy fresher green!
Come, brighter Salem, gladden all thy scene!

A PHOTOGRAM OF SPIRITUAL INDOLENCE.

Except by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding, and so, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw and considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep; so shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man." Prov. xxi. 30-34

We have here indolence portrayed by the hand of a master; and as it stands before us on the canvas, certain facts strike us concerning it; namely, that it is foolish, procrastinating, and ruinous.

I. IT IS FOOLISH. Solomon characterizes this indolent man as one "void of understanding." Wherein do you see this man's folly? *In the flagrant neglect of his own interests.* Unlike the condition of millions who have not one yard of green sod which they can call their own, this man held a little estate in his possession. He had a "field" and a "vineyard," and upon the cultivation of this depended his bread. But he neglected it, and it was grown over with thorns. Morally, this vineyard may signify our spiritual natures, with all their faculties and potential powers, and which it is both our manifest interest and bounden duty to cultivate. There is one noticeable point of distinction between material and spiritual cultivation. "You may cultivate your field by proxy, but you can only cultivate your soul yourself.

II. IT IS PROCRASTINATING. Solomon observed that indolence in this man led to constant procrastination. "I saw and considered it well; I looked upon it, and received instruction. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep." To the indolent man duty is always for the morrow. The idea of working is not given up but postponed from day to day; and the longer it is postponed the more indisposed the mind grows for its performance. It is always asking for a longer delay, always seeking "a little slumber," or always looking to a "more convenient season."

III. IT IS RUINOUS. I. *Consider the wretched condition to which his estate was reduced.* "Lo, it was all grown over with

thorns," etc. It might have waved in golden grain—it might have been scene of loveliness and plenty; but it is an unsightly wilderness, unprotected, open to the foot of every intruder. It is noteworthy that ruin comes not by cultivation but by neglect. Your garden will soon become a wilderness if you neglect it. Heaven's kind arrangement this to stimulate labor. It is so with the soul. You need not strive to ruin yourselves—do nothing and you will be damned.

2. *Consider the utter destitution to which it must inevitably conduct.* By this indolence "thy poverty shall come as one that travelleth," etc. Two things are suggested by these words: (1.) *That the ruin is gradual in its approach.* "Thy poverty shall come." It does not durst on you at once like a thunder-storm. The punishment of the indolent farmer takes all the months from Spring-time to harvest to approach him. Full and adequate retribution does not come at once. "There is a treasuring up." It is coming now "as one that travelleth"—it is on the road. (2.) *The ruin is terrible in its consummation.* "As an armed man." It will seize you as with the grasp of an indignant warrior. Indolence brings ruin.

Brother, thou hast a momentous work to do, thou hast to cultivate the wilderness of thy nature, thou hast to repair the moral fences of thy soul. In other words, thou hast to rebuild the ruined temple of thy being. Thou hast no time to lose. Thou hast slept already too long. "Resolve and do" at once.

"Lay firmly every stone; long years may be,
And stormy winds may rend, ere all be done;
But lay the first: thou mayest not live to see
To-morrow's sun."

THE WORD OF THE LORD.—The Word of the Lord is *tried* (Psalm xviii. 30). A *tried* friend is a *true* friend. The Word says, "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out." John Bunyan, the wild wickedinker-boy, found it so: John Newton the swearing slave captain found it so. Thousands are ready to rise up and say, "The Word of the Lord is tried: I put it to the proof, and it saved me."

Reader, can you say so? Then come and help others to try it also.

MATERIALISM.

THE POSITIVE ARGUMENT AGAINST IT.

(Continued from page 214.)

The next evidence in support of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, drawn from our Lord's teaching, to which I would for a little solicit your attention, you will find in Luke-xvi. 19-31; where we have an account of the death and subsequent condition of the rich man and Lazarus. Now here I would first direct your attention to the fact that, when Lazarus died, we are told that he was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom, which just means that his soul was carried by the angels into paradise. Secondly, we are told that the rich man also died and was buried, and that in hell he lifted his eyes, being in torments. It can hardly be necessary for me to remark, that it was not the body of the rich man that was in hell. That was doubtless buried in his own sepulchre, where Abraham was not, and where the body of the poor beggar would not have been tolerated for a moment. Here then there can be no reasonable doubt that our Saviour taught, that the *souls* of Abraham and Lazarus in paradise and the rich man in hell, were in the exercise of consciousness and general intellectual activity. The rich man is represented as being in torments, and when he could obtain no mitigation of his sufferings, as beseeching Abraham to send Lazarus to his father's house, and testify to his five brethren, who were probably unbelieving Sadducees like himself, regarding the reality of the future state of existence, lest they also should come into that place of torment. It matters nothing whether this is an actual history or a parable. If a parable, it was meant, like all our Saviour's other parables, to impress great truths upon the mind. And two of the truths meant to be conveyed by this parable, if it be a

parable, are the reality of the future state of existence, and the danger of disbelieving it. Such then being the obvious teaching of our Lord in this passage, the conclusion follows inevitably, that if man is merely a material being, and if he has not a soul which survives, in a state of mental activity, between death and the resurrection, then our Saviour taught false doctrine. One almost shudders to utter the statement, but it inevitably follows from the position taken up by the materialists. It was the firm persuasion of this that made me look with such dread on this doctrine from the beginning; and I am satisfied that, if its advocates carry out their principles to their logical sequel, they will land them inevitably in infidelity.

There is just one other proof in support of the soul's immortality, arising from our Lord's teaching, to which I shall at present direct your attention. That proof is founded on our Lord's declaration to the penitent thief on the cross, "Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." In order to evade the force of this striking testimony, materialists contend that the punctuation here is erroneous, that the comma should be placed after the word *to-day*, and that it should read thus, "Verily I say unto thee to-day, thou shalt be with me in paradise, *i.e.* at some future period. This interpretation we hold to be utterly inconsistent with common sense. What new idea is conveyed by the word "*to-day*," if coupled with "*I say unto thee*"? There was no other time when he could give the promise to him of being with him in paradise; but how comforting the promise when told that that very day, immediately after death, he would be with him in paradise. I had some compassion for men who have been inclined to materialistic views, when staggered by some of the obscure statements in the Old Testament regarding death. But here they have

no excuse. Their treatment of this passage I regard as a miserable shift to get rid of a strong testimony against their peculiar views—as handling the Word of God deceitfully—as an attempt to bend a plain statement, so as to force it into harmony with their preconceived views.

There is an event connected with our Lord's history, which affords a very strong testimony, perhaps I should rather say an irresistible evidence, regarding the soul's immortality—I mean the appearance of Moses and Elias with our Saviour on the mount of transfiguration, conversing with him regarding the decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. Elijah passed into heaven without tasting of death, but Moses died like other men, and his body was buried in a valley over against Beth-peor. And yet we have an account of his glorified spirit appearing with Elijah on an important mission to Jesus, during the days of his flesh, from which it is plain not only that the spirits of men live in a state of consciousness and activity when separate from the body, but that the souls of departed worthies are employed by God on missions connected with the welfare of the church on earth. I believe that they are among the spirits sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation. I am confirmed in this view by the fact that the angel who carried John away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed him that great city, the Holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, and before whose feet he fell down to worship, was the glorified spirit of a departed saint. "See thou do it not," said the angel, "for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God." But perhaps the most decisive testimony of all are the last words which Christ uttered on the

cross, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." It is altogether monstrous, and most derogatory to Jesus to suppose that in such solemn circumstances he would commend his breath into the hands of God; and therefore the conclusion is irresistible that it was his soul now on the point of departing, that he commended into the hands of his heavenly Father.

Let us now take a rapid survey of some of the more important evidence for the soul's immortality, contained in the apostolic epistles and in the book of Revelation. Paul speaks repeatedly and very plainly in reference to this subject. In 2 Cor. v. he speaks of the body as being the clothes of the soul, and of death as being an unclothing of it; and though he would rather have passed into heaven without being unclothed—that is, without tasting of death, yet so confident was he of the superior condition even of departed saints, that he was willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. Whilst the spirit was at home in the body, he felt that he was absent from the Lord, and this absence from the Lord was the reason why he wished rather to be away from the body, that he might be present with the Lord. And so he tells us, in the first chapter of the epistle to the Philippians, that for him "to live was Christ, and to die gain." Now would he, who enjoyed so much the service of his Master, have spoken of death as gain, if it had been to put an entire stop to his service in the Redeemer's cause, to deprive him of all communion with him, and consign him, for thousands of years, to a state of unconsciousness and temporary nonentity? Again, he says that "he had a desire to depart and be with Christ, which was far better." The reason why death was gain was that, when it separated him from the body, it would introduce him immediately into the

presence of Christ; and therefore he connects his departing with his being immediately with Christ.

Much in the same way Peter talks of being in this tabernacle—that is, of his soul residing in the body, and of putting off this tabernacle, i.e. of dying: “Yea, I think it meet,” says he, “as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle.”

In Heb. vi. 12, the righteous dead are described as being in actual possession of the promises made to the fathers: “That ye be not slothful,” it is said, “but followers of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises.” In Eph. iii. 15, the whole Church is described as being partly in heaven and partly on earth. “For this cause,” it is said, “I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.” In Heb. xii. 21–24, we are told that in the city of the living God dwell not only God Himself, the Judge of all, and Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and the innumerable company of angels, but also the spirits of just men made perfect, all dwelling together in the same holy and happy place. This idea is beautifully brought out by Charles Wesley in these striking words:—

Let all the saints terrestrial sing,
With those to glory gone;
For all the servants of our King
In earth and heaven are one.

One family we dwell in Him,
One Church above, beneath,
Though now divided by the stream—
The narrow stream of death.

One army of the living God,
To His command we bow;
Part of His host have crossed the flood,
And part are crossing now.

Once more; in 1 Thess. v. 10, it is said of Jesus, “who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together

with him.” This seems to me a very important text, for it clearly teaches that the saints, whether alive or dead, whether in the body or out of it, should live together with Christ. This shows that, though, when Christians die, they are said to fall asleep, this is figurative language, merely taken from the appearance of the body, when death sets his seal upon it, and not at all meant to indicate that the soul falls asleep, or subsides into a state of unconsciousness at death. For here it is said, that Christ died for us, that even when we sleep we should live together with Him.

Time will not permit me to enter at large on the consideration of the passages in the book of Revelation, which bear upon this subject; but there is one so striking, and to my mind irresistible, that I cannot omit it. You will find it in chap. vi., vers. 9 and 10: “And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held.” Now it is here distinctly said, that he saw under the altar the souls of them that had been slain. He saw them living, though their bodies had been slain, and heard them crying with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.” Now here the prophet declares, in language so plain that it cannot be mistaken, that he saw under the altar the souls of martyrs for the truth of Jesus, living in the full enjoyment of their intellectual powers, and praying God to avenge their blood upon their murderers; so that it must either be admitted that the immortality of the soul is a glorious truth of

revelation, or that no confidence is to be placed in the Bible as a revelation from God.

I have not nearly exhausted the Scripture evidence on this great subject. I am satisfied, however, that enough has been said to convince of the immateriality and separate existence of the soul, every candid and intelligent person who comes to the study of the Bible, not with a mind warped by prejudice and a desire to get Scripture on his side, but with the simple desire to know what saith the Spirit in the Word, and to be on the side of Scripture. I am satisfied that, in very many cases, it will be found that the advocates of materialism have adopted that gloomy and degrading theory, not because it was forced upon them independently by the mass of Scripture evidence in its favour, but because they thought it more consistent with another doctrine which they had adopted, and helped greatly to corroborate it. I think it will generally be found that materialists deny the eternity of future punishment, and some of them the very existence of it. For though some of them admit the resurrection of the wicked, others, and I think, according to their system, with far more consistency, deny their resurrection, and contend that death terminates their existence altogether. Coming then to the consideration of this great subject, with such prepossessions, we can see how it is that some men have resisted the immense mass of Scripture evidence on behalf of the glorious doctrine of the immortality of the soul. On no other principle can I see how men of common sense can examine and weigh the *whole* Scripture evidence in behalf of the soul's immortality, and yet resist it. To my mind it appears certain that there is no truth revealed in Scripture with greater clearness and fulness than this; and if I rejected this, I would be constrained to reject the Bible too. If there

are any of our readers who have been carried away by materialistic views, I solemnly and most affectionately beseech them to pause and reconsider the whole subject, humbly, earnestly, prayerfully. The rich Sadducee in hell formed a proper estimate of the moral effects of the doctrine, when he indirectly expressed the conviction that if his brothers continued to hold it, they would be brought down to the same place of torment as himself; and earnestly besought Abraham to send Lazarus, that he might testify to them regarding the immortality of the soul, and the terrible reality of a place of torment in the future state of existence.

It seems to me exceeding strange that any man with the glorious offers of the gospel before him, should manifest a prepossession in favour of the dark, cheerless, and revolting doctrine of materialism. To me the doctrine of the soul's immortality divests death of its gloomiest terrors. And repeatedly have I seen believers, instead of shrinking from death, rather longing for it, and like Paul, having a desire to depart, because they knew they were going to be with Christ, which is far better. Repeatedly have I seen believers sustained by such prospects, not only looking death in the face with calmness but with happiness—full, not only of peace, but of holy joy. We are naturally apt to associate with the grave all that is gloomy and appalling, but the believer learns to look on it with something like comfort, as the place where his worn-out tabernacle is to be laid at rest; yea, rather, as the seed-bed from which a more glorious body shall arise radiant with immortality, and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ.

In the day of health and strength some may like to display their intellectual prowess in combating the generally received doctrines of religion; but I am satisfied that this will minister no comfort to

them, and supply them with no strength in that dark and trying time when heart and flesh faint and fail, and they must descend into another arena and grapple in earnest with another enemy. Let us endeavour so to live now, that when that solemn hour comes we may have nothing to fear, and be able to look upon death, not with alarm but with confidence, and regard it only as the dark passage through which the angels of God will conduct us into the presence of our Saviour God.

IN SEASON.

"I am very sorry I kept you waiting, Uncle," said George with a blush, as he took his seat in the carriage for a drive. "I hope you have not been here long."

"Just thirty-five minutes," said the old gentleman. Then carefully folding up his newspaper, he gathered up the lines and gave them a little admonitory shake.

"I am very sorry, indeed, but you see I was detained, and could not get off before." He would have coloured still deeper if obliged to explain the frivolous cause of his delay.

"If it could not be helped," said the other, "of course it is all right; but if it might have been avoided, why, then it is another matter. Half hours are precious things, my boy, and you will find them long enough if you live long. Punctuality must be a young man's watchword, if he ever hopes to make anything of himself or his opportunities. I had a young friend in New Haven once, who went into business for himself, just as you hope to next fall, but he had this standing failing, he was always a little behind time. I remember once he had need of a thousand dollars to make a payment on a certain day. He could have gathered it up easily enough if he had begun in time. But the day had arrived and he was in great perplexity.—Still there was an easy way out of the difficulty. He ran around to an obliging neighbour and borrowed the sum for three days. Well, he felt quite at his ease after the bill was paid, and the three days slipped by thoughtlessly, and he was no more

ready to pay the borrowed money than he had been the other. It could make no difference with the merchant, he was sure, and he hastened to him with abundant apologies.

"It will make no difference at all with me," said the gentleman blandly, "but it will make much difference for you."

"How so?" asked the other.

"I shall never lend to you again," he said, as politely as if it were a very pleasant fact he was communicating. I was young then, and I always remember the little circumstance, and have been often influenced by it. Poor E. did not succeed well. Business men will soon lose confidence in you, George, if you are not always as good as your word, and every one needs the good will of his fellows. Perfect punctuality should be your lowest aim in this respect. You will lose untold amounts of time for want of it, and cause others to do the same. This is the worst kind of pilfering. Stolen gold can be got back or replaced, but no power can bring back a lost half hour."

WELSH BOY AND HIS BIBLE.

"As I was travelling, not long since, on the mountains of Conway, there passed on the road a little boy with a big book under his arm. I asked him what he had, but we could not understand each other. He was a little Welsh boy, and the book was a Welsh Bible. He passed on out of sight. Our party proceeded along the mountain side, and shortly after stopped to sketch. A small voice from a distance above us caught our ear. I said to my friend, a Welsh pastor, who accompanied us, "Climb up those rocks a little, and see who it is." He did so. It was that little boy on the mountain top praying to the God who made the mountain.—His Bible was open before him. He reads and prays; again he was asking God to bless the town Conway, and that on the morrow (it was Saturday afternoon) many sinners might be converted, and that God would bless His servants everywhere, as they preached His word. Oh, what a glorious religion, I thought, which can make that little boy a high priest of the Almighty. I felt strengthened in my work the next day, and often since that, as I have thought that many such precious little ones are praying for us."

—Rev. Newman Hall.

CHILDREN'S PRAYERS.

I have remarked at the prayer meeting which I attend, connected with a church in this city, that earnest prayers are frequently offered for the children of the church, that they may be converted while young, ere a deceitful and ensnaring world has engaged their affections.

I am acquainted with a family of children all of whom their mother thinks are converted, and one cause she imagines has, with the blessing of God, been the following: Two or three years ago, when so much was said about the Fulton Street prayer meeting, and anecdotes and conversions (often those of children) were published in the religious papers, she read them to her children, together with other religious stories, and one day it was proposed to have prayer meetings with them, the mother making a short prayer, each of the children following according to age, after that a hymn or two were sung, such as "Beautiful Zion," "I have a Father in the Promised Land," "O do not be Discouraged." Sometimes a few verses from the Bible or an anecdote were read, selected by one of the children, each child who could read selecting in turn. They were much pleased and seemed to enjoy their little meetings, never considering them a weariness, but often urging their mother to come and have one. We all know how much children are taken with novelty, and how they enjoy any pleasure, or even tasks, in which their mother is interested with them and treats them as equals.

This prayer meeting is continued at intervals, but the children have for a long time had what they call their own prayer meetings. Each child retires by her or himself about twelve o'clock, if possible, reads the Bible, sings and prays. Even the youngest, who cannot read, is as punctual as the others: at twelve o'clock he goes into a room by himself, shuts every door, prays and sings. He happens to possess a remarkable ear for music, and always sings the tunes correctly, but is sometimes puzzled for the words. A little boy who goes to school and cannot be by himself till three, allows no ordinary occurrence

to delay his prayer meeting. He is very fond of company, and a few days since was told, when he came home, that some children were in the parlor, had been waiting a long time, and he must go in immediately to see them. "No," he replied, "I must have my prayers first;" and he went to a spare room in the third story and was alone a considerable time.

Perhaps some mothers may think it worth while to try what has been so successful in the case of the children I have mentioned. It is a great thing for children to acquire the habit of praying in the middle of the day.

A brief and hurried petition offered up morning and evening does not seem sufficient for these inexperienced little beings, whom we know the devil, like a roaring lion, is seeking to devour.

Mothers who feel anxious about the salvation of their children may want to know what evidence these give that they are converted. They may imagine them to be perfect children. No, they are still selfish, often quarrelsome, sometimes perverse, but they love to pray, they say they love Jesus, and they seem to do so. One little girl just before going to sleep said, "I love Jesus, sometimes it seems to me as if he were carrying me in his arms."

We must not expect too much of children, let us be thankful if they give any evidence that their naturally perverted wills are in a slight degree influenced by the blessed Gospel, and let mothers in their laudable anxiety for the safety and conversion of their children see to it, that their own hearts are kept with all diligence, for "out of the heart are the issues of life."—*Mother's Magazine.*

SABBATH VISITING.

"Aunt Emma, Mrs. Morrison wishes me to go down to their place with her to-morrow morning after service, and come back to church with them in the evening. I did not promise positively, but said I would speak to you about it."

"You do not think Sabbath visiting right, do you, Alice?"

"No, Auntie, but Mrs. Morrison said this was quite different. I was an old

family friend, she said, and only here for so short a time. I cannot see Maria at all, unless I go to-morrow, as she goes back to her school on Monday morning."

"I do not see any difference, my dear; we seldom invite strangers to visit us, and there never can be a good excuse for doing a wrong thing."

"But I am sure, Auntie, they will be quite offended if I do not go. They will expect me to dinner, and I know Mrs. Morrison always makes a great deal of preparation for company, even when only one is expected."

"I think that is only an additional reason, Alice, why you, as a professed follower of Christ, should, as far as your example goes, show your disapprobation of Sunday visiting. These fine Sabbath dinners, which keep domestics away from church, and compel them to spend the day in work, which might have easily been avoided, are very displeasing to God. The command is for us, and for all in our employ. The most fearful threatenings in the Bible are pronounced against them who thus break his holy day. And dare you, my dear Alice, run the risk of so offending God, who has all your interests for time and eternity in his hands, when you are so afraid of the slight displeasure of a fellow mortal. Which do you think it wisest or safest to displease? Oh, it were better to 'be hated of all men for the kingdom of heaven's sake,' than to have the friendship of the whole world 'and lose one's own soul.' So long as we persist in one known sin, and do not repent of it, and turn from it with all our hearts, Satan is well content about us. He would rather have us in the church than not, for we can do more injury to the cause of Christ by our example there."

"I will decline this visit, Aunt Emma, you may be sure, and leave the result in God's hands. I have never looked on the matter as seriously as I should, but I will certainly remember your counsels when I am tempted again."—*Mother's Magazine.*

Burkitt beautifully observes in his journal, that some persons would never have had a share in his prayers but for the injuries they had done him.

THE OPEN DOOR

"Behold, I have set before thee an open door,"
Rev. iii. 8.

Down in a rugged Highland glen,
Far from the busy haunts of men,
A poor old widow dwelt apart,
Of cheerful hope, yet anxious heart,
For ah, her dear, her only child,
By base seducing lips beguiled,
From virtue's path long gone astray,
Lived in the city, far away.

Her child the yearning mother sought:
The prodigal might back be brought—
The girl, now penitent become,
Was hopefully returning home,
When, bound anew by folly's chain,
To her old haunts she turned again.

Alone the mother home returned,
Yet not alone she sighed and mourned,
For to the widow's God she cried,
With faith that woud not be denied.

The answer came. One sleepless night,
Beside the dying embers' light,
She watching lay, when hark—a sound!
Was it a footfall on the ground;
Or had she been by dreams beguiled?—
'Twas she, her lost repentant child!

Surprise and full confession o'er,
"Mother," she sobbed, "that unlatched door—
How came it open, prythee tell;
So late, and in this lonely dell?"

"My child," the mother prompt replied,
And pressed her darling to her side,
"I've never shut it, night nor day,
The long long time you've been away,
For ah, I feared lest you should come,
And, finding no fond welcome home,
Might turn despairing from the door,
And never never seek it more."

In this short tale, oh sinner, see
The love of Jesus Christ for thee.
For thee He came, and bled, and died,
For thee was scourged and crucified;
And, still He mourns thy wayward will,
And yearns o'er the poor wanderer still.
Oh turn, repent, believe, obey,
Forsake thy erring evil way,
No more the waiting Saviour grieve,
Enter the "open door," and live.

—*British Workman.*

S. W. P.

Contemplate the works of God, and thou wilt learn thine own insignificance.—
Maunder.

INDIVIDUAL INFLUENCE IN CONVERSION.

The Christian spirit is essentially a missionary spirit—so much so that it is probable that the disciples who became apostles were elected to that office chiefly because they were pre-eminent in this respect. There is no greater mistake than to suppose that, "the twelve" were arbitrarily chosen and called to be "apostles" from the beginning. They were first called, as we and all others are, to be the disciples of Christ, in the sense of accepting him as Lord and Master. Afterwards, as they evinced their peculiar and personal fitness, they were promoted to the "apostleship."

Some Christians seem to think that it is the exclusive business of ministers to seek for souls, but it is not so. When Andrew sought his brother Simon, and Philip his brother Nathaniel, neither of them was an apostle, nor so much as a deacon in the Church. The apostolic office had not been instituted. Jesus himself had just begun to preach that men should repent, for the kingdom of God was at hand. These brothers were among the first who heard him preach; and no sooner had they left their nets to follow him, than they became "fishers of men," drawing them to Jesus. And so should his disciples do to-day. They should regard this as their principal business, their highest duty—to bring others to the Messiah, to a knowledge of his salvation. To this high calling all others should be made subordinate; for the duty of thus serving our Lord is superior to all other duties.

When this becomes the common conviction of Christians, we "shall see greater things" than have been seen yet in the Church; for then will many a little congregation become a thousand," and many a small church "a strong nation," "until they shall no longer teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know him from the least to the greatest."—*Christian Times*.

It is not enough to learn that which is good, but we must continue in it unto the end.

[For "The Good News."

REMEMBER THOU MUST DIE !

The seasons, as they run their round,
Now mantling green, now white the ground,
Proclaim to each in whispering sound,
Remember thou must die !

The falling leaf, the fading flower,
Forewarn us of that solemn hour,
Tossed by the winds, they say with power,
Remember thou must die !

The mouldering tower, the ruined wall,
That totters verging to its fall,
With reason's voice doth loudly call,
Remember thou must die !

The moths, which live but for a day,
And then for ever are away,
Say, by their short allotted stay,
Remember thou must die !

All things of time point to our doom,
A setting world, or fading bloom;
But powerfully speaks the silent tomb,
Remember thou must die !

X. Y. Z.

NEARNESS TO ETERNITY.

Eternity is just at hand;
And shall I waste my ebbing sand,
And careless view departing day,
And throw my inch of time away ?

Eternity without a bound,
To guilty souls a dreadful sound !
But O if Christ and heaven be mine,
How sweet the accents ! how divine !

Be this my chief, my only care,
My high pursuit, my ardent prayer,
An interest in the Saviour's blood,
My pardon sealed, and peace with God.

But should my highest hopes be vain,
The rising doubt, how sharp the pain !
My fears, O gracious God remove,
Confirm my title to thy love.

Search, Lord, O search my inmost heart,
And light, and hope, and joy impart ;
From guilt and error set me free,
And guide me safe to heaven and thee.

HOW TO GET GOOD FROM SERMONS.—
Pray for a soft heart and a retentive memory; and often speak together of the sermons you hear, and get them harrowed into your hearts, that Satan may be cheated, and your soul saved.—*M. Cheque*.

ON THE DEITY OF CHRIST.

The Divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ may well be considered the corner-stone of the Christian religion, and an essential article of the Christian faith. If our Saviour were less than Divine, we could have no well-grounded hope of salvation through him. If he were only an angelic being, of howsoever exalted a character or nature, we could not have unshaken confidence in him; for we know that angels have fallen from their first estate, and that, therefore, the highest of created beings might fail us at the last. And if he were merely man, we not only could have no security, as man has already fallen, but we should be expressly forbidden under a fearful imprecation in the Word of God itself, to place our hopes in such a saviour; for it is written, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm" (Jer. xvii. 5). But, blessed be God, "as for our Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts is his name, the mighty one of Jacob;" in proof of which we have abundant evidence in the Word of God, and to some of these we shall now direct attention.

The first proof which I shall adduce of the Divinity of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, is taken from the words with which St. John commences his gospel:—"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made" (John i. 1-3).

Here it is plainly and explicitly declared that the Word, which is Christ, "whose name is the Word of God" (Rev. xix. 13), was from eternity; that "all things were made by him;" and that he was "with God," and "was God." We find another striking proof of the deity of Christ in the twelfth chapter of St. John's gospel, compared with the 6th chapter of the Prophet Isaiah, and the express reference made thereto by the inspired Evangelist St. John attributes the unbelief of the Jews, notwithstanding our Saviour's miracles, to the judicial blindness of their hearts; and after quoting, as applicable to them, the awful prediction of that blindness of heart, from

the 6th of Isaiah, the Evangelist adds, "These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him" (that is, of Christ) (John xii. 41). Now, if we turn to Isaiah vi., we shall find that it was the glory of "the Lord God Almighty" that the prophet saw; and yet this the inspired Evangelist expressly declares was the glory of Christ. And in that vision of Isaiah vi., we find the ascription of praise sung by the heavenly hosts, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty," which would appear to refer to the Three Persons of the ever-blessed Trinity in one God.

The next reference I would adduce is to be found in Philippians ii, 6-11, where the Apostle, exhorting Christians to humility, gives an argument to it from our Saviour's example. He begins with setting forth the original dignity of Christ's person, declaring that he was "in the form of God," and "thought it not robbery to be equal with God." He then comes to his humility. "He made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." After which the Apostle sets forth his exaltation: "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." In Romans xiv. 10-12, we have a very striking proof of the Divinity of our Saviour. The Apostle declares that "we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ;" and he proceeds to prove this by a quotation from the prophet Isaiah, which he thus recites, "For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord God, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." This the Apostle quotes as a proof that "we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." And let it be observed that it is said, every knee is to bow to Christ, and every tongue to confess to him; and the selfsame is predicated of God Almighty. It thus appears

evident that Christ is no created being, but is equal to the Father, God Almighty.

Another very strong proof of the deity of Christ is to be found in the beginning of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Christ is there shown to be above angels, inasmuch that he is the object of their adoration. He is described as "the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person," "upholding all things by the word of his power." When the Father "bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." Unto the Son he saith, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." And again, "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands." So the Father speaks to the Son.

But the time would fail to go through all the passages of Holy Scripture in which this important truth of our blessed Lord's Divinity is stated. We shall but glance at a few, in addition to those already referred to, and which need not be recited at length. We find, then, that all the names, the operations, and the attributes of God, are, in full and plain language, and in express terms, given to Christ. Thus he is called God, and his blood is the blood of God (Acts xx. 28); God is said to have laid down his life for us (1 John iii. 16); Christ is called "the true God" (1 John v. 20); "the great God" (Titus ii. 13); "the Lord of glory" (James ii. 1); the "King of kings, and Lord of Lords" (Rev. xix. 16). In a word, he is "over all, God blessed for ever" (Rom. ix. 5). Again, the *creating*, *preserving*, and *governing* of all things are ascribed to Christ in a variety of places of Scripture, and most remarkably in Colossians i. 16, &c. He is said to have known "what was in man," and he showed on various occasions that he knew men's thoughts before they gave them utterance. He is declared to have known "all men" (John ii. 24); that as the Father was known of none but of the Son, so none knew the Son but by the Father (Luke x. 22); he who had seen him had seen the Father (John xiv. 9) He and the Father are one (John x. 30); and it is the will of the Father who had sent him, "that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour

the Father" (John v. 23). He pardons sin, the prerogative of God (Luke v. 20, 21). He sends the Spirit—the gift of God (John xvi. 7); he gives grace and eternal life, of which God alone is the author and giver (John x. 28); and he will raise the dead, which God alone can do (John v. 21, 25). A curse is pronounced against all those who put their trust in man (Jer. xvii. 5), and yet we are called upon to put all our hope of salvation in Christ alone, assured that "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts iv. 12). The Lord Jesus Christ is proposed to us as the object of our faith (Acts xvi. 31), and hope (1 Tim. i. 1), and love (1 Peter i. 8); as the Person whom we are to obey, to pray to, and to praise. So that every act of worship, both external and internal, is directed to him as the proper object. All the hosts of heaven are represented in the Book of Revelation (v. 13, &c.) as worshipping and praising him, even as they worship the Father, ascribing glory, honour, and praise "to God and to the Lamb for ever and ever." Our Lord's disciples "worshipped" him as he ascended into heaven (Luke xxiv. 52). But the most remarkable of all the instances of Divine worship being directed to Christ is in the last prayer of the first martyr, St. Stephen, related in Acts vii. In his dying moments, it is recorded in the 56th verse, that he saw Jesus "standing on the right hand of God;" and with his last breath he worshipped Christ, in two short prayers, which are in substance the same with those in which our Saviour himself worshipped his Father when dying on the cross, saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit;" and "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."

Thus we have seen how strong is the "reason" which we can give for "the hope that is in us," when we put our trust in Jesus as our "God and Saviour," our Rock and Shield, our Castle and Deliverer, as our "all and in all." Well may we adopt the language of the prophet, and exclaim—"As for our Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts is his name, the Holy One of Israel." This is the rock upon which Christ has so firmly built his Church that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The Divinity of Christ is the ground of the Christian's joy, and hope, and security;

without this he could have no assurance of faith, no confidence of hope; while this view of Jesus inspires him with *faith* which cannot be shaken, with *hope* that "maketh not ashamed," and, at the same time, inspires him with love to that blessed Saviour, who, "being in the form of God, and who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, yet made himself of no reputation, but took upon him the form of a servant, and was made obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," for us miserable sinners; who lay in darkness and the shadow of death, that he might raise us from our low estate, and exalt us to be sons of God by adoption, and as such heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ himself in that kingdom which he has purchased for them, and them for it, with his most precious blood.

This doctrine of Christ's Divinity is of the utmost importance in reference to the fundamental doctrine of the atonement; and the controversies of the present day give peculiar importance to this doctrine, and should lead Christians to endeavour to attain just views of Christ's person, in his twofold character of God and man. It has been well observed by an eminent writer of the present day, that "everything which tends to derogate from the Divinity of our Lord tends, as Priestley long ago clearly perceived ('History of Corruptions,' i. 153), to do away with the idea of an atonement, in the proper sense of the word, for the sins of other men" (compare Magee, "Atonement," Dissertation iii). So conversely, all limitations of the atonement, all tendencies to represent our Lord's sacrifice as merely an act of moral greatness (compare Jowett, "Romans," vol. ii., p. 481), will be found inevitably to lead to indirect denials of the catholic doctrine of the union of the two natures in our Lord, and to implied limitations of his Divinity (compare Macdonnell, "Lectures on the Atonement," p. 61, &c.).*

The subject which has been now discussed, and to which the attention of the reader is earnestly directed, is not one of mere speculation. It concerns the most vital truths of our holy religion, involving the doctrine of the atonement for the sins

of men, and affecting all our hopes of pardon of sin and acceptance with God, and therefore affecting all our hopes for eternity.

May God vouchsafe to grant his gracious blessing on this humble effort in defence of a most important truth of Christ's holy religion, to the setting forth of his own glory, and to the establishment of many in the true faith and hope of the Gospel of "God our Saviour" (Titus i. 3).—Dean of Waterford in "Quiver."

"EVERY EYE SHALL SEE HIM."

✧ What has this to do with us? It has something to do with every one of us, from the oldest down to that rosy child who is listening with eyes of wonder to the thought that Christ shall come, and every eye shall see Him. There are many spectacles which only a few among the children of men can see, but every eye shall see Him. Many of us may be gone from this earth before the next great display shall be seen in London, but every eye shall see Him. There may be some grand sights which you feel no interest in; you would not see them if you might, but you shall see Him.

You would not go to a place of worship to hear Him, but you shall see Him. Perhaps you went up to the house of God sometimes, and when there, vowed you would never go again. Ah! but you will be there then, without a question as to your choice. And you will have to remain till the close too, till He pronounces either the benediction or the malediction upon your head. For every eye shall see Him. There is not one of us that will be absent on the day of Christ's appearing; we have all then an interest in it.

Alas! it is a sorrowful thought that many will see Him to weep and to wail! Will you be among that number? Nay, do not look round upon your neighbour—will you be among that number? Alas for ye! You will, if you never weep for sin on earth. If you do not weep for sin on earth you shall weep for it there; and, mark, if you do not fly to Christ, and trust in Him now, you will be obliged to fly from Him and be accursed of Him then.

"If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha;"

* See Ellicott's "Historical Lectures on the Life of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Hulsean Lectures, 1859, page 4, note).

accursed with a curse! Paul said that. In the name of the Church, by its most loving and tender apostle, the soul is cursed that loves not Christ. Heaven on that day shall solemnly ratify the curse with an "Amen;" and the day of judgment brings its thunders to roll in dreadful chorus the sound "Amen;" let him be accursed if he loves not Christ.

But there will be some there who, when Christ shall come, shall greatly rejoice to see Him. Will you be among that number? Will there be a crown for you? Will you share in that magnificent triumph? Will you make one of that royal court which shall delight "to see the King in his beauty," in the land that is very far off?"

Sister, will you be among the daughters of Jerusalem who shall go forth to meet King Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals?

Brother, will you be among those who shall go forth to meet the King when He cometh with "Hosanna, blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord?" Can you say, "Christ is my all: He is all I desire on earth; He is all I need for heaven." If so, long for His appearing, for you shall see Him, and shall be glorified in Him.—*Spurgeon.*

CHRIST ABLE TO SAVE!

Reader, have you come to God through Christ? Trusting that you have, I ask how? In every prayer you offer, in every psalm you sing, in every act of obedience you render, in every out-going of your soul towards God, is there a distinct, a conscious recognition of your own unworthiness, and of Christ's transcendent worth—a felt reliance on Him for acceptance—a simple and a single looking to Him as the sole medium of communication between thy spirit and God? Then are you daily coming to God through Christ, and your coming to God by Christ now shall end in your coming to God through the same medium in heaven above, for seeing He ever liveth "He is able to save to the uttermost them that come to God by Him—'Able to save them,' i.e., to give them full and complete deliverance from sin and all its consequences,"—**"Able to save them to the uttermost."**

What uttermost? The uttermost of guilt and crime? Yes! That uttermost. The uttermost of life? Yes! that uttermost. The uttermost ends of earth? Yes! that uttermost. The uttermost period of time? Yes! that uttermost too. He is able to save to the uttermost them that come to God by Him. To all these uttermosts named, He is able to save. To this uttermost, moreover, even that of heavenly blessedness, and the perfected enjoyment of God through eternity.

What uttermost, then, O sinner, hast thou reached? Is it the uttermost of guilt? He is able to save thee. Is it the uttermost of life? Art thou on the very verge of the grave? He is able to save thee. Only come to God now through Him and He will make thee know the uttermost to which He can save thee.

After death He can do nothing for thee. On this side the grave, I know not the uttermost to which this living Christ of the Gospel is not able to save thee. "Behold, now is the accepted time! Behold, now is the day of salvation!" Come now, then, O thou sinful dying man, to this Living Christ.

"He lives eternally to save."

Thou wilt find His ear ready to hear thy cry, His eye ready to pity, His hand ready to help, His heart open to welcome, and all His ministry of intercession ready to be employed in thy behalf and for thy salvation. "He ever liveth."—*Rev. J. Gould, Newton-Stewart.*

THE BLESSED HOPE

It is grievous to me to remember how little I have been living of late to the glory of my dear Lord and Saviour. We are not of the world, even as He is not of the world. Our sympathies are not with the world, but with the Lord. The Spirit of Christ abideth in us, and we have passed from death unto life. O! that we may love, more than we do, the Lord's appearing, and cherish it as a "blessed hope?" If we love Christ at all, we cannot but love His appearing; and if we love His appearing, our conversation will be in heaven. Our redemption draweth nigh—the Lord is at hand. It is time to be trimming our lamps, for, in a day we think not, Christ will come.—*Heverson's Remains.*

CHRIST—OUR ALL-IN-ALL.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the ALL-IN-ALL of His redeemed. In every want He is their Friend. In every danger He is their Defence. In weakness He is their Strength; in sorrow, their Joy; in pain, their Peace; in poverty, their Provider; in sickness, their Physician; in hunger, their Bread; in trouble, their Consolation; in perplexity, their Counsellor; in the furnace, their Refiner; in the flood, their Rock; in assaults, their Refuge; in accusations, their Advocate; in debt, their Surety; in slavery, their Ransom; in captivity, their Deliverer; in the day, their Sun; in the night, their Keeper; in the desert, their Shepherd. In life He is their Hope; in death, their Life; in the grave, their Resurrection; in heaven, their Glory.

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

ONWARD.

When the Apostle tells us of his faith in the Son of God, who had loved him and given himself for him, he is letting us into the grand secret of his life. He moved onward under the constraining power of a love that had redeemed him from this present evil world. Hence he forgot the things that were behind, and pressed forward with an eye fixed on meeting the Lord in glory. Why should not we follow in the same track? To rest in the things of this world, is to sit down in Satan's enchanted bowers. Jesus found no resting-place on earth. Let us, then, not loiter on

the race. "Onward" is the word. Let us be in earnest as we never were before. Our time here is very short: let us not lose it in looking back. Time enough for that hereafter. In such an high, and holy, and heavenly calling as ours, how diligent should we be! We live in peculiar days, when Jesus is much dishonoured by his own people, because they are neither hot nor cold. We are afraid of being thorough Christians. The Church needs pressure to arouse it. She needs a great tug to shake her out of the lap of the world. Let us be true to our calling; making the Lord's service our delight; as in the days of Ezra, building the walls of Zion with one hand, whilst holding a weapon in the other.

TRUE AND FALSE DIGNITY.

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me."

As I sat near the window with a book during the afternoon, I witnessed a scene which showed me that fine looks were not always signs of a fine character.

There was a swing attached to a large tree in front of the house, and one after another of the children had been enjoying it. Presently something attracted their attention in another part of the lawn, and the whole party trooped away toward it, except Corinthia, and little Fanny Hart, a poor little lame girl, who could not run and jump like the rest, though she was as bright and gay as any of them.

"Ah, won't you please give me a swing, Corinthia?" asked the little thing eagerly, noticing that the young girl did not seem to care to go with the others. "I can't play anything but just to swing, you know, and I haven't had half enough yet."

The little pleading voice was very sweet, and you will think of course Corinthia gratified the child. But no! she drew up her figure to its greatest height, and said, with an air meant to be excessively grand,—

"Why, child, is it possible you think I am going to make myself hot, and roughen my hands, to swing you? I wouldn't lower my dignity so."

And she turned haughtily away, leaving little Fanny abashed and disappointed. Just as I was putting down my book to go to the child, another girl ran up, and took hold of the rope.

"Don't mind what she says, Fanny," said she, good-humoredly; "he is always terribly afraid of hurting her dignity. Mine isn't so easily lowered, and I'll swing you as long as you like, you poor, dear little tot."

And with that there was a hearty push, and little Fanny's laugh rang out merrily as she flew up among the branches.

Little people, which of the girls possessed the true, and which the false dignity?

Sabbath School Lessons.

May 8th, 1864.

SAMSON'S MARRIAGE.

Read Judges xiv. 1-21.

I. Samson seeks a Wife.

Verses 1-4. Samson, now in manhood, chooses a wife from among the Philistines. They were descendants of the Canaanites. It was against the Jewish law to do so, Deut. vii. 3; and very unbecoming a patriot to unite himself with his country's enemies. He tells his parents, and seeks their countenance, though he would not yield to them when they sought to dissuade him from his purpose. *It was of the Lord*, seems to mean only that God determined to overrule it, and does not justify Samson.

II. Samson Kills the Lion.

Ver. 5-9. The lion met Samson while alone and unarmed, probably going with his parents to visit the woman he sought for his wife. *Vineyards* are often spread round the cities of the East. *A young lion*. Specially fierce and strong. *Rent him*. Strangled the lion by mere force of muscle. David had his shepherd's staff. *Told not his father or his mother*, nor any one else—his modesty was a victory over himself and the love of applause. The jackals and vultures would soon devour the lion's flesh, and the huge bones would form a hive for the bees that abound in that country.

III. The Riddle given.

Ver. 10-15. *A feast* at every marriage was the universal custom in the East. Samson's father, knowing that his son was to be Israel's deliverer, would feel sadly perplexed at all this. *Thirty companions*. "Children of the bride-chamber," Matt. ix. 15. *A riddle*. This was a common mode of entertaining a company, ver. 15. *On the seventh day*—to avoid confusion in the story, some think this was the seventh day of the week, not of the feast. The threat used shewed how barbarous the people were.

IV. The Riddle Discovered.

Ver. 16-20. Samson could not resist his wife's tears. Some who will not be forced can be persuaded to do wrong. His wife betrayed his confidence. She was a Philistine at heart, and Samson lost his wager. Perhaps Samson was too poor to pay his forfeit; he would not, however, deny his obligation; but, guided by the Spirit of God, he resolved to break off his connexion, and declare war with these treacherous friends. His new re-

latives understood him so, and his wife married another.

APPLICATION.

1. *Choose the good as your companions*. Samson suffered much for neglecting this; Rehoboam did so too, 1 Kings xii. 13; Ahab chose a bad wife for his companion, and Jezebel made him as bad as herself, Prov. i. 3-20; Psal. i. 1.

2. *Honour your parents as long as you live*. Some think whenever they are grown up, they are free from this duty. It is a mark they are neither wiser nor better, though older. None can repay their debts to their parents. Does the fifth commandment say, Honour them till you are eighteen or twenty-one? Samson evidently was dutiful, though he erred in not taking their advice—Solomon, 1 Kings ii. 19; Prov. i. 8; xxiii. 22; Christ and his mother.

3. *Strength and health of body come from God*. Samson's did, and so does yours. See that you use them aright for the purposes for which God gave them, Rom. xii. 1. You ought not to be proud of either.

4. *Be modest*. See that you deserve praise whether you get it or not, Eccl. ix. 15. Samson was content to be great, though his great feat was unknown. Seek the praise of God, Rom. ii. 7; Matt. xxv. 21. Think often of your sins, seldom of your excellencies.

5. *Never give or take a wage*. Such gaming always violates the golden rule, Luke vi. 31. It is a most improper way of losing or acquiring property: see its bad effects in Samson's wager.

6. *Never betray a trust*—of any kind—never tell a secret—stand by your promise at all costs, Psal. xv. 4. Those who betray a trust deserve never again to be trusted. So Samson left his wife, ver. 19.

7. *You may be a greater conqueror than Samson*. God's Spirit will enable you to conquer your heart and the devil, Prov. xvi. 32; Rom. xvi. 20. Samson failed sometimes in this.—*Edin. S. S. Lessons.*

May 15th, 1864.

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.

Read Luke xvi. 19-31.

Connection—This parable seems to have been intended to enforce the truths, verses 13th and 15th, that none can serve God and mammon, and that what men highly esteem, is an abomination to God.

I. The Rich Man on Earth, ver. 19.

A certain rich man. Christ does not give his name. He spent much on his body.—*Purple* was the dress of princes. He *fasted*

sumptuously every day—all his life. He is not charged with any sin except making this world his god, and neglecting the poor. He died, and *was buried*. Imagine the grand funeral! No *angels* watched his deathbed.

II. Lazarus on Earth, ver. 20-22.

Lazarus, a beggar, friendless, except the kind poor who carried him to the rich man's gate; without clothes, food, or home; diseased, without medicine.

He *desired to be fed with the crumbs*, but it does not say he was. The dogs licked his sores. Probably this is noticed as an aggravation of his sufferings; he could not drive them away. *He died*—nothing is said of his body—but his soul was carried by angels to *Abraham's bosom*, a Jewish name for heaven.

III. The Rich Man in Hell, ver. 23-31.

To a Jew, Abraham was the greatest and best of men, and it was intended to startle the pride of the Pharisees, when one so despised as Lazarus was described *as in his bosom*.

The rich man still looks on Lazarus as an inferior who should serve him. He prays, but not to God. *Father Abraham*—claims the privileges of a Jew. No hope of heaven or escape, only seeks a *drop of water*. *My tongue*, James iii. 5, 6. *Son*. Yes, you are an Israelite. *Remember*. The memory of a bad man will torment him for ever—*Thy good things*. The things to which you gave your heart.

The rich man prays for his brethren, who probably were living as he had done. He fears that they would share his fate, as they followed his example. Ungodly men have still their natural affection. He is refused; they have the Bible; if that is rejected, no other messenger will be given or would be listened to. Better to have prayed for them while on earth.

APPLICATION.

1. *Who serve mammon?* Those who, counting the things of this world *their god*, give their hearts to them, and who do not love their neighbour. Such was this rich man; such are all who love this world better than God, whether they have much of it or little. Judas; Gehazi. Beware of riches. Matt. xix. 23.

2. *How happy those who serve God.*—They may be poor as Lazarus, yet are they rich, Rev. ii. 9. God could make them rich here if it was good for them. Job, Abraham, Joseph were so. They have Christ to save them, the Spirit to purify them, angels to serve them, God to love them, heaven for their home.

3. *God judgeth not as man judgeth.*—

Men judge by appearance, God by the heart. Picture these two men:—"One highly esteemed by men;" rich and proud, luxurious and splendid, courted and praised, yet an heir of hell; how soon there! The other, a wretched beggar—friendless and helpless—desiring the crumbs of the rich man's table—a prey to dogs even while alive, yet an heir of heaven, loved by God, and borne by angels to His throne and crown in heaven.

What are you in God's sight? I Sam. xvi. 7; Rev. iii. 17.

4. *Beware of that place of torment.* The rich man was not a liar, or a thief, or profane, but he was *ungodly* and *selfish*. He was lost not for doing wrong, but for not doing right. He could say, "I am sure I hurt nobody. Am I obliged to take care of all the beggars who come to my door?" Oh, take the warning he would have sent his brothers! Matt. xxv. 46.

5. *Consolation to the poor*, Heb. iv. 9, Rev. ii. 9. Poverty will keep none out of heaven, James ii. 5. None get there *because* they are poor.

6. *Hell is far from heaven.* You are going in the direction your heart goes now—*if towards God, to heaven—if away from God, to hell!* Matt. vi. 21. Now Christ offers His precious blood, not a "drop of water" will be given then.

7. *Pray now*—for yourself. God is waiting to answer. It will be too late then, Jer. vii. 13; Prov. i. 24. For your brothers. Even that rich man prayed in hell for them. On earth he was like Cain, Gen. iv. 9. Beware.

8. *All who neglect the Bible are lost*, Heb. ii. 2; x. 28. Do you obey it? You will never get another message from heaven—*Edin. S. S. Lessons.*

FOR THE EVENING.

O Jesus fold me in Thy gentle arms,
And guard Thy little lamb from all alarms
Through this dark night.

O Jesus, do Thou pardon all my sin,
And in Thy precious blood wash me quite clean,
And set me right.

O Jesus, bless my friends so kind and dear,
Take care of them, and be Thou very near
To all this night.

—*Children's Friend.*

TRUTHFULNESS is a corner-stone in character, and if it be not firmly laid in youth, there will ever after be a weak spot in the foundation.