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THE GOOD NEWS.

A SEMI-MONTHLY PERIODICAL:

DEVOTED to the RELIGIOUS EDUCATION of the OLD AND YOUNG

RELIGION NOT CHRISTIANITY.

BY REV. H. B. WRAY, B.A., MINISTER OF CHURCH OF ENGLAND, LAKEFIELD, COUNTY ARGENTEUIL, C.E.

By Christianity I mean the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the supernatural revelation of God respecting the salvation of sinners.— By Religion I mean the natural theories of man; such a belief in a Superior being, and judgment to be passed upon him in a future state, as will lead him to propitiate the power which is to judge him. It would be difficult to find any one who was not influenced by some sense of religion, in this latter sense of the term.— Every one, however ignorant of the Gospel, has some religion of his own; sometimes it may be Christianity, sometimes a modification of Christianity, frequently a base counterfeit of it, and more frequently a most absurd compound of error and superstition.

Now, my fellow sinners, as I desire that you should be not only religious but Christian, I purpose setting before you in an elementary way, the distinctive principles and peculiar doctrines of Christianity. I shall on this occasion make a few introductory remarks in the shape of suggestive materials of thought, addressed chiefly to the young, which, may the Lord bless and make instrumental in bringing you all into the faith of those who were first called *Christians at Antioch*. Is it not surprising that the majority of professing Christians do not know what Christianity is; is it not more surprising that the majority of professedly Christian instructors, instead of teaching the distinctive

principles, doctrines, and duties of Christianity, teach the ethics and duties which are common to Heathen, Jewish, Pagan and all false systems of belief. Young people, who have no definite ideas upon such subjects, are not aware that almost all heathen philosophers inculcated virtue and morality, and that the Pagan devotee is far more influenced by his religion, than the majority of those Christians whose sincerity we are enabled to form a judgment of by observing their usual manner of life.

If Christianity rests upon certain fundamental principles, surely Christians should know what the first principles of their religion are. Most people believe Christianity to be true as a system, while few know what the peculiar truths of Christianity are. "I appeal," writes Hannah Moore, "to clergymen who are called to attend dying beds, do they not find, that the persons to whom they are addressing themselves, have no first principles to which they can be referred, that they are ignorant, not only of the science but the language of Christianity." Were you to ask the accomplished young lady whose education was finished at a first class school what Christianity is, perhaps she would answer that it was the religion of Christians, and perhaps with no more accurate knowledge of the subject than if she had said that Hindooism is the religion of Hindoos.

All preaching and other religious instruction is vague and superficial, out of

place, unless the peculiar doctrines and principles of Christianity are understood by the hearer. If real instruction is to be given it must commence at the point where present knowledge ends. That young lady's minister assumed a higher degree of knowledge than she actually possessed.—We must lay the foundation if we would provide for the security of the superstructure. I am convinced that much of the infidelity, rationalism, and scepticism of our age is in a great measure attributable to defective public instruction, defective because not sufficiently elementary and expository. There is far too much vague, mere moral, exhortatory preaching addressed to the feelings, and far too little clear distinctive Scripture teaching. The loose gospelling, vague and negative theology of all churches has taught the world the first principles of infidelity, by suppressing, spiritualizing and explaining away all the express teaching and positive theology of the Bible—thus sceptics have been emboldened to carry out these principles which the church has sanctioned to their fullest development in the absolute denial of every truth which distinguishes Christianity from all human systems of religion. Primitive Christian practice consisted in *obeying from the heart the form of doctrine which was delivered.* Modern religious practice consists in believing what we please, and doing what we like.

The people, who seldom study theology or their Bibles, are left in comparative ignorance of the first principles of Christianity. Texts are selected as mottoes, but the mind of the Spirit in the context, is not sought after, or the primary application of the language as a whole is not elucidated; hence in the midst of religious privileges there is a deplorable lack of Scripture knowledge and intermittent excitement instead of instruction in righteousness. In order to ascertain what distinguishes Christianity from all human systems of religion, we must seek instruction from the infallible authority of Scripture. Without this acknowledged standard of truth there can be no first principles, no foundation to build arguments upon, no premises to draw conclusions from. All religious truths must be tested, not by their mere uniformity and agreement with ethical theories, but with the Scriptures. Conformity with God's

word is the only infallible test of truth in doctrine or practice. The question respecting all moral and religious subjects is not their abstract truthfulness and reasonableness, but this—are they Scriptural? However conclusively and inductively we may reason upon the subject of religion, if our principles or premises are taken from other authority than the Bible, our conclusions are unsound and worthless. A series of propositions, results and conclusions may be logically true and consistent with each other, and yet false; so all systems of religion which do not derive their principles from the Bible, however harmonious and consistent with their own laws, are unsound and worthless. Theology has added no new truth to Christianity but a vast amount of error. Christianity is the religion of the Bible, therefore the distinctive principles and genius of Christianity must be learned from the Bible. We must believe all things in the Bible and prove all things from the Bible. Few have taken their first impressions of religion from the Bible, hence such ignorance and difference of opinion among professing Christians.

The religious instruction generally given to young persons is based upon rational rather than Scriptural principles. Christian parents teach their children natural, not evangelical religion; they are afraid to trust God with His own truth. The doctrines of grace cannot be understood by the child, therefore they are not to be taught. Pelagianism and Socinianism are taught because, perhaps, being better suited to human nature they find a readier reception in the young mind. But the religion of God, communicated to the soul is a supernatural act, and the same Almighty energy is alike displayed in the impartation of this principle to the mind of the parent as of the child. *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.—Except ye receive the kingdom of God as a little child, ye cannot enter therein.* Had our Lord revealed to Nicodemus when a youth, the mystery of the new birth, perhaps instead of doubtfully asking *how can these things be,* he would have believed and said, like little Samuel, *“speak Lord for thy servant heareth.”* In order to adapt religious instruction to the comprehension of the young, mere natural religion

is taught, and the seeds of scepticism sown which must be rooted out in after years to plant the incorruptible seed of the Word. These obvious truisms especially demand attention from the rising generation of our very liberal age, who are led to think that the only consistent views of religion are to hold no views at all, that religious consistency is illiberality, and a sacred jealousy for God's truth is bigotry, whose minds are so leavened with the political creed that we can only be orthodox Christians by paying equal reverence to all forms of faith, false or true. How few in any community have any decided religious views or even aim, if they aim at anything at all, higher than mere regularity of life; how few are able to give an answer to every man that asketh their reason for the hope that is in them. Are not people mostly of opinion that all modes of religious belief are equally safe; through the death of Christ God is rendered so merciful there is a general impunity in sin, and all will meet in heaven at last, however far they are on earth from that newness of life, that faith, that repentance unto salvation, that narrow way and straight gate, which the author of Christianity has assured us few shall find. Our Lord asserts as expressly that they who believe not the truths of the Gospel shall be damned, as that they who believe them shall be saved. Is it not then, of the utmost importance that we should clearly distinguish between the religion of God and the inventions of man.

Religion, divinity, and theology are Latin and Greek terms of heathen origin, although custom and use have fixed their sense to Christian doctrines taken out of the Scriptures. The most ancient heathen writers were called Theologues, the Egyptians and Chaldeans had their theology. Christianity, then, is generally a religion—specifically, the religion of Christians.—Religion, correctly speaking, should be considered either as heathen or Christian, natural or supernatural: the one is from the light of nature, the other from divine revelation. The Persians, Greeks, and ancient Britons, with their Druids, Bards and Vates were far more religious than modern Christians. All nations have some religion. Almost all wars have been religious wars. The first man who ever died, died for religion. The followers of false religions

have ever been more zealous than the Christian members of the church of God. Did you see a poor deluded Hindoo lying on a bed of spikes, propitiating his gods, however you might pity the absurdity of his belief, you could not doubt the sincerity of his devotion. Who more strictly religious than those to whom our Lord said, "*the publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.*" Ignatius Loyola was more religious, sacrificed more, and did more for his church than any hundred Protestants have done since for Christ. Louis XIV. of France, and Henry VIII. of England, were not the best exponents of Christianity, yet both were very religious, the one was so very devout and regular in the forms of worship as to be styled "Most Christian;" the other, "Defender of the Faith." His Protestant daughter, Elizabeth, was very religious and a great admirer of the Bible. "I walk," said she, "many times in the pleasant fields of the Holy Scriptures, where I pluck up the goodly herbs of sentences by pruning, eat them by reading, digest them by musing, so that having tasted their sweetness, I may less perceive the bitterness of life." But her last moments lead us to fear, notwithstanding her admiration of the Scriptures, that she was ignorant of the most precious and distinguishing truth which could alone speak peace to her troubled conscience—salvation by the blood of Jesus Christ. When dying she cried out "An inch of time—millions of money for an inch of time." She had been used to have a new dress every day, and had ten thousand costly dresses in her wardrobe, yet her soul was naked, she had not the *wedding garment, the fine linen clean and white which is the righteousness of saints.* Valueless then was all her beautiful metaphor and classic learning, while ignorant of that truth which can turn the hut of the beggar into the palace of God—the truth which enabled the poet Cowper's poor village lace girl to

"Rejoice, and read with sparkling eyes,
Her title clear to mansions in the skies,"—

the truth which enabled another Elizabeth, the poor Dairyman's Daughter, upon her dying bed of straw, to exclaim—"Victory, victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ—"

His blood cleanseth from all sin." Her soul was ready in full dress for the marriage supper, arrayed in the royal robe of her Redeemer's righteousness. She was, indeed, a *King's daughter all glorious within*, and she now *beholds the King in his beauty*.

Cain and Abel represent the two classes into which the world is divided—natural and supernatural. Natural religion may be considered either as it was in Adam, before the fall, or as it is in his posterity since the fall. Supernatural, or what is by pure revelation, was first signified in the prophetic declaration of mercy pronounced by God to the serpent—"*It, the seed of the woman, shall bruise thy head.*"—These mystical words reveal the sum of evangelical religion, and contain the germ of Christianity, the incarnation of the Messiah and salvation by His blood. This kind of Theology was more clearly developed by those significant types, the skins of slain beasts, which our first parents wore, beautiful emblems of the blood-bought robe of salvation, the wedding garment of the redeemed, the justifying righteousness of Christ, which God puts upon His people. Abel was a believer in Evangelical religion, he approached God as a sinner, he brought blood the typical sacrifice for sin. Cain was an unbeliever in revealed religion, still he performed a religious act, he laid an offer upon God's altar, and certainly, to a natural mind, a more becoming one than the blood of an innocent animal; but he self-righteously despised the sacrifice which the Lord ordained for sin, and rationally deemed his first fruits better. Salvation by blood, was foolishness to Cain as it was to the Pharisees, and is to thousands of very religious, moral and orthodox people now, who have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge, who being ignorant of God's righteousness are going about to establish their own righteousness, and will not submit themselves unto the righteousness of God. This distinguishing truth of Christianity, which Cain stumbled at, is still the rock of offence, the hard saying, the offence of the cross to the natural mind, but to those whose senses are exer-

cised to discern spiritual things, the power of God and the wisdom of God.

"Such was the wicked reasoning Cain,
And such by nature still are we;
Until by grace we're born again,
Faithless, blind, and proud as he.

Like him, the way of grace we slight,
And in our own devices trust;
Call evil good, and darkness light,
And hate and persecute the just."

What Luther said of Popery is true of self-righteousness, "Every man is born with a pope in his heart." Every man is born with a Cain in his heart. The cross has ever been to the many foolishness, but it is the wisdom of God. Philosophy never propounded this doctrine, science never discerned it, reason never guessed at it, man's wisdom never devised it—no, God revealed it.

This is the cardinal doctrine of Christianity, the Gospel truth which, if a man ignorant of theology as the thief on the cross believes, and were to die the next moment, he possesses that knowledge which is essential to salvation: ignorant of all other truths of Christianity and knowing this in a very small measure, the believer knows the way of acceptance with an offended God. *How man can be justified with God.* How a holy and just God who will in no way clear the guilty does clear, pardon, justify, sanctify, glorify guilty, vile, hell-deserving sinners. *Exod. xxxiv. 7.* The apparent contradiction, presented in this passage, can alone harmonize God's attributes of justice and mercy in the sinner's salvation. This plan of salvation shows us how God can pardon the vilest of sinners without clearing the guilty; how God can be just to his holy law and the justifier of the ungodly; it enables the guiltiest wretch on earth to hope for pardon, and lift up his head before the tribunal of Jehovah with the confidence of an angel, not upon a plea of mercy only, but of justice, satisfied justice. Christ, as surety, became responsible for the law-delt of His people, he became amenable to law and justice for the sins of all believers. But if God does not clear the guilty, how does He forgive iniquity; if He forgives iniquity, must He not clear the guilty. One word solves the problem—atonement; Jesus Christ as the sinners surety and sub-

stitute, took on him our sins and thus, by imputation was esteemed virtually guilty: the sins of all believers are fully atoned for by Jesus becoming their surety, their sins are imputed to Him, His righteousness imputed to them; thus, His name is called *Jesus because He saves His people from their sins*. Hence, God in pardoning believers does not clear the guilty because in the eye of a satisfied law they are innocent; as guilty, they have been punished in the death of Christ, the legally accounted one. This Gospel plan of saving sinners is not a tenet, a single doctrine of Christianity but Christianity itself; it alone exhibits God infinitely just and infinitely merciful, and makes salvation wholly of grace without works of any kind, as necessary for its reception. In this doctrine *mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace kiss each other*. This is Christianity, and all systems of religion that suppress, modify or adulterate this doctrine are Christianity's base counterfeit, dishonorable to the finished work of Christ.

All men ignorant of the Gospel, although most devout religionists, worship like the Athenians an unknown God, and hate the just and holy God of the Bible. The God of the natural man, is no more the just and terrible God of the Bible, who will not clear the guilty, than the Osiris of the Egyptians, or the Jupiter of the Greeks. The belief of the Gospel, can alone give us correct views of the character of God and ourselves. Upon the ideas which men form of God's character depends the character of their religion.

How can man be justified with God, is a question of such eternal moment, that none should rest till they have it satisfactorily answered to their own souls. There is in every one of you a conviction that you need a righteousness in which to stand before Him, *who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity*. But while this conviction is universal as humanity, there are very few, even among morally living Christians, who seriously set about the consideration of this subject, and still fewer who understand what God in mercy has revealed concerning it. And I might add, fewer still who teach this blessed doctrine as the sinners only ground of hope.—While all professing Christians acknowledge a belief in Christ's atonement to be

some way necessary to salvation, yet comparatively few, even members of the church, upon a dying bed can tell how Christ's work becomes effectual for the salvation, peace, comfort and assurance of the individual sinner. From a total ignorance of this blessed doctrine of substitution, which was Paul's sheet anchor, (Philip iii. 9,) sick and dying persons invariably seek comfort from their evidences, experiences, faith, conscience, and good life. These are poor saviours—*miserable comforters are ye all*. They build their hopes upon something within themselves instead of without themselves, they make a saviour of their feelings, or their faith, instead of Christ. The question with them is not *what* they believe, but *how* they feel. Faith as a moral quality is no more the ground, or meritorious cause of our salvation than works. Faith is the medium through which the sinner receives the righteousness which makes the sinner just. *Let Israel hope in the Lord, for with Him is plenteous redemption, and He will redeem Israel from all his iniquities. My soul doth wait upon the Lord, and in His word do I hope*. Christ, and the promises of God, are the sinners ground of hope and consolation. The evidences of the Spirit's work within us, our faith, experience or sanctification, are not the ground of our hope—no Christ is our hope, *who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption*.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

THE WAY TO IMPROVEMENTS.

THE TRUE WAY TO INTRODUCE IMPROVEMENTS IS NOT TO TALK ABOUT THEM, BUT TO TRY THEM. The people that are most likely to argue against them when suggested, are most likely to agree with them when successful. Few people like to be old-fashioned, specially those people that are terrified at something new; when once they see the fashion in use, they won't rest till they make the change. It should encourage those who are aiming at practical reforms, that ultimate success invariably lies in the way of duty. You see something that you are convinced should be done. It would be easier and more heartsome to have the same thing done in a score of places, or by a hundred persons at the same time. But you cannot convince anybody that you are right; or at least you cannot bring any one to begin to put the thing right. Yet you at least are convinced, and it is incumbent on you to carry out your conviction.

The first sod in some great undertaking must be cut by some one. Usually it is the act of some popular man who is urged to the easy task. But the actual first sod was cut when the scheme was excogitated, and the early difficulties were met and overcome, and the whole work was put on such a sound basis that it became safe for the popular man to undertake the honor. Even he has his power, and the work, perhaps, would not succeed without it.

There will always be in the Church, as in the world, people who are bent on making improvements. They are not always the wisest. There are everywhere dreamy theorists that scorn the hum-drum of careful experiment, and can only speculate on a large scale. The necessity of submitting theory to the test of minute and sufficient experiment, is important for the theorist himself as well as for the public. But it is nevertheless of unquestionable importance to encourage improvement, specially in the Church, where things are apt to get into stereotype and remain fixed.

Material interests cultivate and encourage invention. Spiritual interests ought to be more powerful in suggesting and carrying out improved methods of work. It is only a dead Church that lets things alone. Our Sabbath-school system was a great improvement; but it has in many cases advanced little in efficiency from its commencement. Little comparatively has been done to train efficient teachers, or to make the Sabbath-school what it should be—a Church service for the young. How little has been done to improve our education for the ministry. A man is scarcely taught to preach till he enters a pulpit. Any teaching in the way of sermon-making may help him to address a few scholars—but scarcely to preach the gospel to the poor. What have we done yet to train in pastoral work; to make efficient elders or deacons; to use the vast resources of our Church membership in work; to cultivate anything of Church fellowship, except in a very general and unsatisfactory form; to have Mission Agencies as extensive as the need? There is surely much room for improvement. An increased spiritual life will bring more minds, and in greater variety, to bear upon various defects; and will at the same time give freedom of action and nobleness of judgment. While there is work for the Lord to be done, there is a possibility of better methods, greater economy, larger resources, deeper skill, and a better spirit. Improvements must begin with individuals, although often in many at the same time. — *Wynnd Journal.*

Were it not for this word of possession, the devil might say the Creed to as good purpose as we. He believes there is a God and Christ, but that which torments him is this—he can say “my” to never an article of faith.

THE BOY-SOLDIER.

“I wish I was a soldier,” says a bright, energetic little fellow, under our window.

Do you little boy? Come hither, then, and listen to me a few minutes, and I will put you on the right track. I will tell you how you can have your wish.

In the first place, you must choose sides, and enlist. Who do you want to fight for? God or Satan; for right and truth, or for sin and wrong? God would like to have you on his side—so would Satan. God promises you a bounty—so does Satan. But I am older than you, little friend, and know more about this whole business, and I would like to whisper something in your ear which may influence your choice. If you enter God's service, you may have to work hard, but you will have a kind and loving master, and sure and good pay. If you make up your mind to serve Satan, you will have to work quite as hard, under a master that cares nothing but to burden and distress you, and who will cheat you at last out of the poor reward he has promised. This is true as many on both sides can bear witness. Now, which will you choose?

I will serve God.

Very well; now you must come and enlist at once under Jesus, “the Captain of our salvation.” He will ask, Are you willing to serve me faithfully? Are you willing to serve me forever? He does not want any rebels, any traitors, in his camp. He does not want followers who will stand by him for a little while, and then, as soon as danger and difficulty come, desert and run over to the enemy. No; you must take the oath of allegiance and stand by it. You must be his entirely, his eternally. Then he will require you to serve him cheerfully, patiently, unquestioningly, courageously, and never be ashamed of him or his cause; for he says, “Whosoever is ashamed of me and my words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels.” Are you willing to agree to all this? Will you enlist on these terms?

I will.

Then you must “put on the whole armor of God.” Do you know what that is? Paul tells us. You must be girded about, that is, clothed with truth, and have on the breast-plate of righteousness. And be assured, my little friend, whoever secures that garment and that breast-plate is perfectly secure from all harm; proof against every weapon of the enemy. Your feet must be shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. Shoes made from that preparation can never wear out. Then you must take the shield of faith, which is so peculiar that it quenches all the fiery darts of the wicked foe, as water puts out a flame, or a puff of strong wind extinguishes a candle. You must put on too the helmet of salvation, and take in your hand the sword of the Spirit. With this armor, and watching and praying continually, you will be a match for your adversaries. Have you got it?

No, but I will procure it if I can.

It is the gift of God. He provides it for all those who apply for it.

I will ask him for it.

Then if you want to be a “good soldier of Jesus Christ” you must learn to endure hardness. You must not mind trifles or complain that what you have to do is not easy and pleasant. Whatever is required, do with all your might as well as you can, and with a pleasant look and manner. If things occur to vex or trouble you, you must not pay any attention to them, but fling them aside

and press right on in your Master's service. You must not entangle yourself with amusements and pursuits of this life, for you need to be free from everything that would hinder or embarrass your movements. You must not indulge in idleness, for idleness makes the strongest muscle weak. You must not indulge yourself in ease or selfish comfort, but accustom yourself to self-denial and constant, diligent exercise. Thus you will grow stronger every day, and your duties will become more and more familiar and agreeable. Self-denial makes good soldiers; self-indulgence very poor ones, unworthy of such a glorious and good Commander as Jesus Christ, who himself was made perfect through suffering. Can you say yes to all this?

I will try.
Now then, armed and equipped, you must "fight the good fight of faith." The service of God is not a mere name or profession; it is an active, imperative service. Your enemies will be real, very cunning, unwearied, numerous. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." We must fight manfully, never flinching, never retreating. The promise, is "They that endure to the end shall be saved."
Little boy, will you be a good soldier of Jesus Christ?
H. E. B.

Preach to the Children.

As the train stopped for a moment at the station, I saw an old man, plainly but neatly dressed, standing on the platform, apparently with the design of entering into the railway carriages. He seemed uncertain what course to pursue, till the conductor spoke to him, and directed him to enter the carriage in which I was sitting. It occurred to me, from his manner, that he was never on board a railway carriage before. As he came near I rose, and requested him to take the unoccupied seat by my side.

"I'm much obliged," said he; "I'm not used to this way of travel, and don't understand exactly the way to proceed. I was never in a carriage of this kind before."

It is remarkable how much we can learn of a man from the tones of his voice.

I was satisfied that I was sitting by an honest, amiable, unpretending man.

"You do not live near a railway," said I.
"I live about forty miles north of this, and I seldom go from home. I have not seen the road since it was finished. I was down here when they were making it, and I have not been here since."

"You have not been much of a traveller."

"No. The new modes of travelling were not invented till my travelling days were pretty much over. I am now going a long journey for a man of my years. My daughter, who has been living for more than twenty years in the state of M., has lost her husband and all

her children within a year, and I am going after her to bring her home."

"How many children had she?"

"Three. The eldest was nearly nineteen years of age, His mother looked to him to take care of her, and of his brother and sister; but he was called away a few months after his father, and the children soon followed. My poor daughter is a widow and childless."

"I hope she knows where to go in her sorrows."

"I reckon she does. I believe she was converted when she was twelve years old. She lived like a Christian till she was married, and moved out to M., and I have reason to believe that she held fast her profession."

"Was her husband a religious man?"

"No."

"Is your wife living?"

"She has been in heaven above five years; I wish my poor daughter could have her to comfort her."

"But you say she knows where to go to get a more tender sympathy than even a mother can give."

"Yes. As I said, I believe she has been a Christian since she was twelve years of age. There were quite a number of children joined the church when she did, and they made the best Christians there were in the church."

"Those who go to school young make more progress than those who begin later in life.—So it is with those who enter the school of Christ."

"No doubt of it. We had a minister at that time who preached to the children a great deal. He would sometimes stop in his sermon and talk to the children. When he had been considering a point, and explaining it to the congregation, he would say, 'Now, I want the children to get hold of this;' and then he would talk to them in a way [they could understand. Some ministers think they do enough for children when they teach them some of the truths of the Bible, and tell them they must be good. Our minister used to preach repentance and faith to them, just as he did to grown-up people, and his labours were blessed to the conversion of a great many of them. I wish more ministers—I wish all ministers—would do as he did. I believe there would be more children converted."—*Christian Treasury.*

THE STRAWBERRY GIRL.

"Straw-ber-ries! Straw-ber-ries! Who will buy? Who will buy?"

The musical voice of Nellie thrilled the words so sweetly, and her appearance was so clean and neat, that she soon found customers at the commencement of the strawberry season.

"Come in, my girl, what is your price?"

"Tenpence a basket, Miss."

Nellie stepped into a spacious hall of a fashionable house in M——street, where a young lady stood in her morning dress, with flowers in her hand, just gathered from the conservatory.

"Well, they are worth that—so fresh and ripe. Give me half-a-dozen baskets."

As the lady dropped the five shillings, as she supposed, into Nellie's purse, the smile with which it was received penetrated like a sunbeam into her heart.

"You seem very happy," said Miss Minnie Hamilton; for that was the young lady's name. "Do you earn your living by selling strawberries?"

"Yes, Miss. In the summer I sell berries, and in the winter I go to school part of the day, and help mother the rest of the day."

"And what makes you so happy? Can you tell me the secret?"

"Mother says that we ought to be bright and happy, because we have so much to be thankful for."

Minnie Hamilton looked at the strawberry girl with amazement. With all the wealth and luxury of her home, she was often discontented and unhappy. How a poor girl who had to work hard for her living could be happier than she was, puzzled her.

"How does your mother support herself?" she asked.

"She takes in sewing, Miss. Sometimes she sews half the night through."

"Then what in the world has she to be so very thankful for?" exclaimed Miss Hamilton.

Nellie smiled again sweetly, as she answered:

"Some people, as good as we are, have no home, and have nothing to eat. But mother and I have a little room to live in. She sings at her work all day long, because, she says, God is so good to us. We

have bread and potatoes every day, and on Sundays we have meat. Don't you think, Miss, that is something to be thankful for?"

A deeper tint glowed upon Minnie's cheek. "Yes, yes," she answered nervously; and then followed a pause, during which she stored away in her heart, like hidden treasure, the lesson which Nellie had taught her, and which was to be reperused often in after years, when discontent caused her to murmur, as some little cloud, real or imaginary, hung over her destiny. "You are happier far than I: may God forgive me!"

Minnie Hamilton was an only daughter, petted and idolized by her parents. Indulgence had injured, though it had not spoiled her. So fully had every wish of her heart been gratified from her birth, that she regarded it as a kind of privilege peculiar to her condition, to murmur if the slightest shadow came between her and the fulfilment of her most extravagant desires. Poor Minnie! poor, although abounding in riches. "One thing thou lackest," one thing, which wealth cannot purchase—the joy of a contented heart.

Yet Minnie had noble qualities: generosity and active benevolence, with strong moral and religious principles. One shadow, the shadow of *discontent*, clouded them all.

Nellie had put her little purse into the pocket of her apron; and now she issued into the street again and recommenced her strawberry song, till she was summoned by another customer, who purchased largely. As she was about adding the payment she received to her little store, she discovered a small rent in the purse, and sitting down she emptied the money into her apron to examine it. As she did so, she discovered a sovereign, which had evidently been given her by mistake by the first purchaser.

"I will go right back with it," thought Nellie.

She waited, however, to rearrange her baskets; and while doing so, the Tempter came, with evil thoughts, to test her strength and principle.

"Why go back with it?" said the wicked voice: "perhaps the lady meant to give it."

"But I do not know that," said the tender conscience of Nellie.

"Well you can do good with it," said

the voice, appealing artfully to her filial love: you can purchase something for your mother. She works hard enough for all she has; and this will buy her a neat dress to wear to church."

Suddenly the smile died away on Nellie's lip; her step grew less light. There was a weight at her heart. It was the burden of a guilty thought. She had parleyed with Evil, and its shadow was on her path. It had dimmed the happiness of her heart.

Now, happily for Nellie, Conscience, "that voice of God in the soul," came powerfully to her aid. It recalled vividly the previous Sabbath evening, when her mother sat with her at the window, just as the sun was sinking, and after their scanty supper had been disposed of.

"Nellie," she said, as she laid her head upon her knee, and smoothed back her dark hair, "you could not go to the Sunday-school to-day, because you had no shoes to wear. Perhaps we can earn a pair before another Sabbath; but I will teach you the commandments." Then Nellie repeated them after her. All were vivid now to her memory; but especially, and as if written in letters of fire, stood forth the eighth:

"Thou shalt not steal!"

Nellie's heart sunk within her. Had she listened, and obeyed that evil voice, what might she have become—a *breaker of God's holy Commandment!* Nellie waited not a moment; but terrified at her own thoughts, she rushed back, lest that evil voice should speak again, and rested not till she reached the home of Minnie Hamilton.

"You made a mistake, Miss, You gave me this," holding up the sovereign, "for a shilling."

"Did I? Well, it *was* a mistake. I am near-sighted; but you are *honest*, and shall have it as a reward."

"No, Miss, thank you; I'd rather have the shilling."

"You would?"

"Yes, Miss, if you please."

"What a singular girl. Tell me *why* you would rather?"

"Because—because—it would remind me."—Nellie burst into tears and covered her face with her hands.

"Of what? tell me."

"How I was tempted to break the eighth commandment, miss."

"And to keep the sovereign, do you mean?"

"Yes, Miss."

"But you resisted the temptation, as God gave you strength. Now tell me your name: I must remember it."

"Nellie Townsend."

"There is no sin, Nellie, in being tempted. The sin consists in yielding to temptation. Now that you have resisted, you will find yourself strengthened in might to overcome evil. Only resist the *first promptings* to do wrong, resist *them*, and all will be well. Nellie, you were not aware of it, but to-day you taught me a lesson of contentment, which I shall not easily forget; and you shall have been a minister of good to me. And you must let me reward you. You must keep that sovereign to remind you of what has occurred to-day, and you have no reason to be ashamed of it. Now tell me what was the temptation? What did you most desire to do with it?"

Nellie hesitated, and then said: "Last Sunday, mother had no dress to go to church. That would more than buy one. I only thought of it for a moment."

Minnie Hamilton turned aside without speaking. When she looked again there was a moisture on the eyelids, which had not often been there before.

"Does your mother require anything else? Does she not want a bonnet, too?"

"Yes, Miss; but I shall earn that by my berries. Mother's sewing has nearly paid the rent this month."

"Nellie, you and I must be friends. Go and sell the remainder of your strawberries, and call on your way home."

That evening, Nellie was tripping home with her empty basket; but in it lay a new straw bonnet, and a package which she was directed not to open till her return. Nellie's mother was looking anxiously for her when she arrived, but what was her astonishment and gratitude when she heard her story, with a full confession of the temptation, not a word of which she withheld.

When the package was opened, it was found to contain a nice calico dress for each, with a bank-note fastened within. Upon a slip of paper were written these words:

"For Mrs. Townsend, as an acknowledgment for a benefit received from her daughter, whom she has reared to be an example of truth and honesty."

From this time, Nellie and her mother were under the patronage of the Hamilton family. Sewing was supplied, for which they received good pay, and Nellie was transferred to the Sunday-school Bible-class where she was regarded as a pattern of truth and integrity for her associates.

And shall not her example speak also to our readers, and remind them of that which the Bible teaches—to "resist evil," to follow that which is good!

TOPPERS.

Well, my friend, how passes time with you? With me it seems to hurry along as rapidly as a railroad carriage; if every week had fourteen days, and every day eight-and-forty hours, I should not even then be able to accomplish one-half of what I undertake. Still in the busiest life there are moments of leisure, and as even these ought to be turned to a profitable purpose, you shall now have another hint from Old Humphry.

Many of you know London city, but as to knowing a hundredth part of the strange things which take place there, that is quite out of the question. My method is, when witnessing a multiplicity of odd occurrences, to treat them as I do blackberries—I pass by a great many, and pick out only those that I like best.

Whoever has been in London in the fruit season, must have heard men, women, and children, crying out in all directions, "Hautboys, fine hautboys."

These hautboys are large strawberries, and are sold in baskets called pottles, which, tapering from the top, go off less and less to the bottom.

I was passing along, on a hot day, when a pile of these pottles, in a fruiter's shop, caught my attention. There was one of particularly fine fruit, and I soon had hold of it; but the men cried out in a hurry, "Stop, stop, sir! I cannot sell them."

"Cannot sell them?" said I, "and for what reason?"

"Oh," replied he, "I cannot sell them, for they are *toppers*."

Now, these *toppers* were the largest sized

strawberries, picked out on purpose to put on the tops of the other pottles, to make the fruit look better than they really were. "Come," thinks I to myself, "if you will not let me have the *toppers*, you cannot hinder me from taking away the lesson they have taught me." So I walked off, talking to myself about the *toppers*.

At the corner of the next street, a draper's shop, some dozens of good-looking handkerchiefs were hanging at the door, and marked at the low price of fourpence each. Thinking this no bad opportunity of laying in a stock of half-a-dozen good handkerchiefs for a worthy but poor friend, I entered the shop, but was told that they only sold these handkerchiefs to customers, and that if I had any of them, I must buy something else with them. Old Humphrey was soon out of the shop again, thinking to himself that he ought to have known better than to have gone into it. The handkerchiefs were nothing in the world but *toppers*, and were hung at the door to make people believe that things were sold cheaper at that shop than they really were.

One of the objects I had in view in my walk, was to buy a leg of mutton; and observing two very fine legs hanging by themselves at a butcher's shop, I told the butcher to pull the one of them down, for that I had set my mind upon it.

"The legs are sold, sir," said he; "but you may have the shoulders to match them."

"Sold!" replied I; "why, if they are sold, what is the use of letting them hang up there?"

"Only to show what sort of mutton I sell," said the butcher. I saw in a moment that the two legs of mutton were his *toppers*, and that, of course, he would not part with them.

When I came to Smithfield, I stopped awhile, for a horse-jockey was selling a horse to a young gentleman, who appeared to me to have far more money in his pocket than judgment or discretion in his head. The gentleman seemed disposed to fancy a black horse, but the jockey began to puff off a brown one, and talked so much of "thorough-bred," "courage," "spirit to the back bone," "high action," "sure-footed," "fast-going," "free from vice," "quiet as a lamb," and fifty other puffing phrases, that I thought to myself. "Ay! ay! Mr. Horse-dealer, these highflying terms

are your toppers, and will enable you, no doubt, to get rid of your brown horse."

About an hour after, I saw two ladies getting into a coach; they were very gaily dressed; so much so, that the scarf of the one, and the shawl of the other, were quite sufficient to attract attention; but their head-dresses struck me more than either the scarf or the shawl, for in one of them was stuck a bunch of artificial flowers, almost as big as a besom, and in the other, several ostrich feathers, a foot or two high. "More toppers," thought I, hurrying along; and those who are caught by them may find perhaps, the heads of the wearers still higher than the feathers and the flowers."

Having occasion to call on a tradesman, to settle an account, I found him in a violent passion with his shopman for a trifling mistake; this grieved me the more, because he had the credit of being a religious man, and a truly religious man will seek for grace to restrain his passions. The tradesman soon after began to talk to me on serious subjects, and quoted several texts of Scripture; but soon I perceived he was not sincere, that he was not religious at his heart, and that he merely used the texts of Scripture as toppers, to enable him to pass as a religious character.

Now, what shall we say to those things? Why, seeing the errors of others, let us try to avoid them, and act with godly sincerity in things spiritual and temporal.

Take, then, the hint of Old Humphrey; bearing in mind, that there are toppers in dress, toppers in trade, and toppers in religion, as well as toppers in strawberries.
—*Old Humphrey's Address.*

WILL YOU TAKE IT?

I once found myself, in company with a party of friends, in the gallery of a small village church, listening to a discourse from a coloured minister, or rather exhorter.—After some preliminary exercises, a gray-headed man, evidently a patriarchal personage, arose, and announced as his subject, "The history of Dives and Lazarus," which he proceeded to explain and enforce.

One illustration he used was full of quaint simplicity, and at the same time so adapted to express the idea he meant to convey, that it struck me forcibly. He was

trying to show how a sinner should accept the Gospel offers of salvation.

"Suppose," said he, "any of you wanted a coat, and should go to a white gentleman to purchase one. Well, he has one that exactly fits you, and in all respects is just what you need. You ask the price, but, when told, find you have not money enough, and shake your head.

"No, massa, I am too poor; must go without," and turn away.

"But he says, 'I know you cannot pay me, and I have concluded to give it to you—will you have it?'"

"What would you do in that case?—stop to hem, and haw, and say, 'O, he's just laughing at me, he dont mean it?—No such thing. There is not one of you who would not take the coat, and say:—

"Yes, massa, and thank you, too."

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

What impression the words had on the old man's coloured auditors, I cannot tell, but as our group left the church, one of the ladies remarked to another:

"What a strange idea that was about the coat?"

"My dear friend," was the reply, "it suited my state of mind, rough and unpolished as it was, better than all Dr.———'s elaborate and eloquent arguments this morning. I am so glad that I came here. This is the way that I have been despairingly seeking for years. How simple! How plain! Free grace alone! Yes, I *will* take God at His word—

'Nothing in my hands I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling.'

AMBITION.

Men are not so much mistaken in desiring to advance themselves, as in judging what will be an advance, and what the right method of it. An ambition which has conscience in it will always be a laborious and faithful engineer, and will build the road, and bridge the chasms, between itself and eminent success, by the most faithful and minute performance of duty. The liberty to go higher than we are, is only given when we have fulfilled the duty of our present sphere. Thus men are to rise upon their performances, and not upon their discontent. A man proves himself fit to go higher who shows that he is faithful where he is. A man that will not do well in his present place, because he longs to go higher, is neither fit to be where he is nor yet above it; he is already too high, and should be put lower.—*Beecher.*

The best way to get more talents, is to improve the talents we have.—*Bickersteth.*

Look to the end of worldly ambition, and what is it? Take the four greatest rulers, perhaps, that ever sat upon a throne. Alexander, when he had so completely subdued the nations that he wept because there were no more to conquer, at last set fire to a city, and died in a scene of debauch. Hannibal, who filled three bushels with the gold rings taken from the slaughtered knights, died at last by poison administered by his own hand, unwept and unknown, in a foreign land. Caesar, having conquered 800 cities, and dyed his garments with the blood of one million of his foes, was stabbed by his best friends, in the very place which had been the scene of his greatest triumph. Napoleon, after being the scourge of Europe, and the desolator of his country, died in banishment, conquered, and a captive. So truly "the expectation of the wicked shall be cut off." Prov. x. 28.

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

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

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

THE ARK.

Amid the spreading flood of evil which on all sides continued to rise around him, Noah heard the word, "Make thee an ark." The command was startling. He was to provide against an unknown judgment.—Reason, experience, and prejudice, would raise doubts, and suggest objections; but God had spoken.—The man of God was persuaded. He acted, and prepared, and was saved. Probably ridicule and sneers would embitter his days of trustful toil.

He would stand as every body's bye-word for brain-sick delusion. This is faith's constant trial, but quick of ear to hear, and quick of eye to see a guiding God, it remains unmoved. It tramples down hindrances. It embraces the cross, and wins the crown.

And now the threatened judgment comes, the clouds gather,—the ceaseless torrents fall. Where now is the jest, the taunt, the bravery of unbelief? The truth of God is a truth discovered too late. Destruction is found to be a reality, when the victim feels its grasp. Refuge has ceased, earth is a whirlpool of despair.

Reader, such is the solemn fact, *wrath* denounced, and *wrath* not feared, is *wrath* without escape. But hearken, for every drop of this huge deluge has a voice which says, As surely as the ungodly of the old

world once lived, so surely did they sink in anguish. The word of God responds with as many tongues, as surely as men tread the same earth, so surely will the final flames burst forth. What! though the hour be not expected, unheeding slumber is one sign that it is near. A worn out thread scarcely restrains the streams of the fiery flood. The end is at hand. Soon, and it will be here,—soon, and it will be here,—soon, and we shall have had our part in it.

Reader, will it find you in the ark of salvation, or writhing in the billows of the lost? Pause and reflect. The world decrepid and blind with sin, is tottering to the gulf of ruin. Are you, then, secure in an all-sufficient haven; or are you unsheltered as a tiny bark, in the midst of a wild ocean's roar?

Why do I ask? Because I would have you safe, and happy, and peaceful, and blessed for ever. But safety there is none:—happiness there is none:—peace there is none:—and blessedness there is none, except in the Gospel Ark, which is Christ Jesus. He is the deliverance from all peril. He is the heaven-high refuge. He is the all-protecting safety. Our hiding place is the mighty God. Our salvation is Jehovah's fellow. Our glorious Sanctuary, is the glorious Jesus. The portals of this Ark are wide open. All things call you, nay command you to come in. God's finger writes above the door, Whosoever enters is for ever safe. Nor death, nor hell, can injure or affright the rescued inmates.

It may be you are at ease in some false refuge. Perhaps you think it sufficient to have been taught the truths of Jesus. The ark was well studied of old. Day after day it was the gaze and discourse of thousands. But this saved not. They who trust to a mere knowledge of the truth, will find their memory hereafter, a keen edge to the gnawings of the undying worm. In forms, ordinances, and services, it may be you draw very near. And seem to place your minds on saving grace. Thus many touched the Ark, and did no more. As the waters rose, they would cling to it with agonized grasp. In vain—they are without. And all without is death. And so, reader, is it now, there is but one security, and that is in Christ. Out of Christ all is danger, in Christ all is safety. We are safe only

when enclosed and wrapped up in Christ. We are above peril only when dwelling within him, the Ark. We are covered only, when we nestle in his wounded side. We are hid only when gathered under his wide-spread wings.—*Archdeacon Law.*

AN OLD DISCIPLE.

An old disciple, is an old Christian in spiritual experiences. O the experiences that he hath of the ways of God, the workings of God, of the word of God, of the love of God! O the divine stories that old Christians can tell of the power of the word, of the sweetness of the word, of the usefulness of the word, as a light to lead the soul, as a staff to support the soul, as a spirit to quicken the soul, as an anchor to stay the soul, and as a cordial to comfort and strengthen the soul! O the stories that he can tell you concerning the love of Christ, the blood of Christ, the offices of Christ, the merits of Christ, the righteousness of Christ, the graces of Christ, and the influence of Christ! O the stories that an old disciple can tell you of the indwellings of the Spirit, of the operations of the Spirit, of the teachings of the Spirit, of the leadings of the Spirit, of the sealings of the Spirit, of the witnessings of the Spirit, and of the comforts and joys of the Spirit! O the stories that an old Christian can tell you of the evil of sin, the bitterness of sin, the deceitfulness of sin, the prevalency of sin, and the happiness of the conquest over sin! O the stories that he can tell you of the snares of Satan, the devices of Satan, the temptations of Satan, the rage of Satan, the malice of Satan, the watchfulness of Satan, and the ways of triumphing over Satan! As an old soldier can tell you of many battles, many scars, many wounds, many losses, and many victories, even to admiration: so an old saint is able to tell you many Divine stories, even to admiration.

Pliny writes of the crocodile, that she grows to her last day; so aged saints, they grow rich in spiritual experience to the last. An old Christian being once asked if he grew in goodness, answered, "Yea, doubtless I do, for God hath said 'The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree (now the palm tree never loseth his leaf or fruit, saith Pliny); he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God'. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing.'"—Ps. xcii. 12 A fellow of this promise Isaiah mention; 'Hearken unto Me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by Me from the belly, which are carried from the womb: and even to your old age I am Ite;

and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you."

There is nothing more commendable in fulness of age, than fulness of knowledge and experience; nor nothing more honourable than to see ancient Christians very much acquainted with the Ancient of days.

It is a brave sight to see ancient Christians like the almond-tree. Now the almond-tree doth flourish and is full of blossoms in wintry old age; for, as Pliny tells us, the almond-tree doth blossom in the month of January. Experiments in religion are beyond notions and expressions. A sanctified heart is better than a silver tongue. No man so rich, so honourable, so happy as the old disciple that is rich in spiritual experiences; and yet there is no Christian so rich in his experiences, but he would be richer. As Julianus said, that when he had one foot in the grave, he would have the other in the school; so, though an old disciple hath one foot in the grave, yet he will have the other in Christ's school, that he may still be treasuring up more and more Divine experiments. And by this also you see what an honour it is to be an old disciple.—*Apples of Gold, by the Rev. Thomas Brooks.*

‘WHAT’S THE MAN GOING TO DO?’

OR,

THE PRAYERLESS HOUSE.

The aged grandmother is sick. The pastor calls to tender his sympathy, speak a word of Christian consolation and encouragement, and, if invited, to offer prayer.

Being kindly introduced into the sick-room by the daughter-in-law, he takes a seat at the bedside of the enfeebled mother in Israel, and spends a short season in conversation on those points which never fail to interest the disciples of Jesus as they draw near to eternity. Such members of the family as are at hand assemble and give respectful attention, the mind being diverted only by occasional outbursts of one of the little flaxen-haired grandsons, whom his mother succeeds in keeping within reasonable bounds. As the flush on the cheek of the suffering patient indicates to the pastor that his remarks must not be further extended, and as he accordingly says a few closing words, the veteran pilgrim requests that prayer be offered. As the pastor gently kneels to address the throne of grace, the little boy, with mark-

ed surprise, appeals to his mother as he sits in her lap: "Mother, *what's the man going to do?*"

Oh, what a volume does this question at once publish! In New England, in Massachusetts, within sound of the church bell, within sight of the spire pointing toward heaven, within the house where domestic peace and plenty reign, a child, himself old enough to comprehend something of the love of Christ, looks with amazement on the servant of the Lord as he kneels for prayer, and earnestly asks his mother to explain the strange act!

What a responsibility will be found, in the great day of the Lord, to have reposed on those parents who, intrusted with the 'nurture and admonition' of children, find themselves obliged to explain to them the strange thing 'the man is going to do,' who comes in as a minister of Christ, and bows the knee to supplicate the blessings of heaven for the sick and sinking grandmother, and for all in the house. How awful and overwhelming the responsibility which those parents sustain who stand at the head of a household, where are all the mutual obligations which attach to any family,—where are intelligence, kindly feeling, and no lack of earthly comforts; parents who are themselves not unfrequently in the house of God, but who, nevertheless, by 'restraining prayer,' practically recognise no God,—no bountiful Giver of all they enjoy! Cannot parents who never pray be prevailed on duly to consider the duties they owe to the little immortals committed to their care? Will they not be moved to weigh well the point, *now*, that when they with their children shall appear before the judgment seat, not to be prayed for, but to account to God for not having themselves prayed, they will be under the painful necessity of reflecting that, while they had fed and clothed their children, and tenderly cared for them in sickness, they had neglected, either by precept or example, to give them any conception of the nature and importance of prayer? and that, therefore, while the posture of prayer was being assumed by the parish minister, their children were struck with surprise, and anxiously besought to have the great mystery explained.

Prayerless parents, look forward and consider, as you are able, what your feet

ings must be, should your children be taken from you without ever having seen you in the attitude of prayer,—without having heard your voice supplicating for them the mercy of God, or teaching them to pray!—*Tract Journal.*

A LESSON IN OBEDIENCE.

"Jack! Jack! here, sir! hie on!" cried Charlie, flinging his stick far into the pond. Jack don't want to go; it wasn't pleasant swimming in among the great lily leaves, that would flap against his nose and eyes, and get in the way of his feet; so he looked at the stick, and then at his master, and sat down, wagging his tail, as much as to say, "You're a very nice little boy; but there was no need of your throwing the stick in the water, and I don't think I'll oblige you by going after it."

But Charlie was determined. He found another switch, and, by scolding and whipping, forced Jack into the water, and made him fetch the stick. He dropped it on the bank, however, instead of bringing it to his master; so he had to go over the performance again and again until he had learned that when Charlie told him to go for the stick, he was to obey at once. Charlie was satisfied at length, and, with Jack at his heels, went home to tell his mother about the afternoon's work. He seemed quite proud of it. "It was pretty hard work, mother," he said. "Jack wouldn't mind at all until I made him; but now he knows that he has to do it, and there will be no more trouble with him, you'll see."

"What right have you to expect him to mind you?" asked his mother, quietly.

"'Right,' mother? Why, he is *my* dog! Uncle John gave him to me, and I do everything for him. Didn't I make his kennel my own self, and put nice hay in it? And don't I feed him three times every day? And I'm always kind to him. I call him 'Nice old Jack,' and pat him, and let him lay his head on my knee. Indeed, I think I've the *best* right in the *world* to have him mind me."

His mother was cutting out a jacket. She did not look up when Charlie had finished, but, going on steadily with her work, she said, slowly, "I have a little boy. He is my own. He was given to me by my heavenly Father. I do everything for

him. I make his clothes, and prepare the food he eats. I teach him his lessons, and nurse him tenderly when he is sick. Many a night have I sat up to watch by his side when fever was burning him, and daily I pray to God for every blessing upon him. I love him. I call him my dear little son. He sits on my lap, and goes to sleep with his head on my arm. I think I have the 'best right in the world' to expect this little boy to obey me; and yet he does not, unless I *make* him, as I would have to make a dog."

"Oh, mother!" cried Charlie, tears starting to his eyes, "I knew it was *wrong* to disobey you, but I never thought before how *mean* it was. *Indeed*, I do love you, and I'll try—I really *will* try—to mind you as well as Jack minds me."—*Child's Own Mag.*

A CHILD'S FAITH.

In a public school in New York, a short time since, on an alarm of fire, a terrible panic ensued, and many of the scholars were injured by rushing to the doors, and one of the teachers, a young lady, jumped from the window. Among the hundreds of children with whom the building was crowded was one girl, among the best of the school, who, through all the frightful scene maintained composure. The colour, indeed, forsook her cheek. Her lips quivered the tears stood in her eyes; but she did not move. After order had been restored, and all her companions had been brought back to their places, the question was asked her how she came to sit so still, when everybody else was in such a fright. "My father," said she, "is a fireman, and he told me, if there was an alarm of fire in the school, I must just sit still."

Our God is the Father of all,
The Father of mercies and love;
He pities the works of His hand,
Though He reigns in the heavens above.

Not a sparrow can fall to the ground
Without His permission or care;
From such a kind Father and Friend,
Oh! what have His children to fear?

We have nothing to fear but from sin;
It is sin that displeases our God;
When we do not obey His command,
Like a father, He uses the rod.

THE GOOD NEWS.

October 1st, 1861.

Evenings with John Bunyan.

This is the title of a book published by Messrs. Carter & Brothers, New York.— Its title is not the most fortunate, as it does not adequately convey an idea of the subject matter of the book. It ought to have been ‘Conversations on the Pilgrim’s Progress’, and we have great pleasure in bearing our testimony, that in the form of conversations on this immortal work, much interesting and important information is communicated.

It is told in story, that, on one occasion, a popular clergyman gave a copy of the Pilgrim’s Progress with Expository Notes by himself, to one of his parishioners.— Meeting him one day, he enquired whether he had read it. “Yes, sir,” said he. “Do you think you understand it?” said the minister. “Oh yes, sir,” was the answer; “and I hope before long I shall be able to understand the notes.” This book will not call forth such a testimony. Its conversations throw great light on the pilgrims progress, and are of such a character as to help the young to understand it.

We annex a chapter, not only to show the character of the publication, but also on account of the importance of the subject treated in it. We wish the publication a large circulation.

WINDS OF DOCTRINE.

SUBJECT.—Christian is misled by the bad counsels of Worldly Wiseman; but being warned by Evangelist, returns into the high-way.

The party assembling in the library was this evening favoured with the presence of Dr. Merrifield, who was just now spending a few days at the house of his brother-in-law, Mr. Sidney, while some arrangements were being completed preparatory to his removal to a village a few miles from the

Hall. He was a great favourite with all the family, but he was Harold’s special admiration: The plan had been fully explained to him by the children, and had received his hearty approval. The selected portion of the “Pilgrim’s Progress” having been read, Dr. Merrifield observed, “I perceive that you have under consideration, to-day, a far more dangerous snare than the Slough of Despond.”

Mrs. S. Yes, indeed. For one inquirer who comes short of Christ through despondency, a thousand fall through self-righteousness and false security.

Mr. S. Everything which keeps the awakened sinner from going directly to Jesus Christ is highly perilous, be it sloth, or secret despair, or the love of sinful indulgence. But, without question, the most plausible danger of all, springs from a universal proneness to trust in our own righteousness (under some form or other) for our acceptance before God. Hence it is the apostle cautions us to be well established, and not to be like “children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.”

Mrs. S. It is almost incredible the multitudes of apparently devout and estimable persons who live and die in this snare of the devil.

Dr. M. Yes. The *village* of Morality has swelled into a very large and populous town, since religion has become so much the fashion. I know both the place and the people well. I lived there myself many years.

Har. Did you indeed uncle? Then you can tell us something about them, I dare say.

Dr. M. That I can, and with a very good will too. The inhabitants are very worthy people in their way, I can assure you. Most of the men are gentlemanly, and the women kind-hearted and polite.— The streets are handsome and clean, and you may walk through them at any hour, day and night, and never hear a bad word. There are also hospitals, and schools, and charitable institutions without number.— There are churches and chapels too, of every sort. On Sundays there are thronged with respectable hearers, and you may see

eloquent preachers in the pulpits, and hear delightful music in the galleries,

Har. All that seems very nice. Pray, what else is there?

Dr M. The inhabitants are exact in paying their debts,—that they were always famous for; and very particular in saying their prayers,—this has rather grown upon them of late. They do not care to associate with the “City of Destruction men,” because they are in rather bad repute—unless, indeed, it is to persuade them to come and live in their town, which many do. Though, you must know, most of the dwellers in the town of Morality are bred and born there. Paul used to live there when his name was Saul. And that young ruler was born there who ran after our Lord, asking Him what good thing he should do. And many very high families make it their abode, and bring up their children there.

Har. Well, I do not wonder at that.—They seem very good sort of people. What else?

Dr M. What else? I’ll tell you.—They are all as deaf as adders, and as blind as moles.

Har. What! all blind and deaf?

Dr M. All blind and deaf—every man and woman of them. There is stupidity in their consciences, and hardness in their hearts; and spite of all their religious talk, in their souls they hate the Lord Jesus, and reject the only way of salvation. And some sneer at the pilgrim’s path, while others even go so far as to persecute the pilgrims themselves.

Har. Oh, how very shocking! Well, then, I cannot wonder you made up your mind to leave them. But how came you to get away?

Zill. Especially, dear uncle, as you must have been deaf and blind, of course, like all the rest?

Dr M. That would be too long a story. Certainly, my dear, I was quite deaf to the voice of God, and totally blind to spiritual things. Suffice it to say, a kind physician anointed my eyes and unstopped my ears. Then, for the first time in my life, I heard the mountain, which overhangs the place, rumble fearfully, and I saw flames and smoke issuing from it. I arose and fled for my life, and found my way, by the help of the same kind friend, into the christian’s

narrow path.—But how is this, Harold? You and I have been keeping all the conversation to ourselves!

Mr S. Never mind, doctor. We are all as much entertained as Harold with your account of the town of Morality.

Har. Well, but who was that Mr. Worldly Wiseman who advised Christian to go and live there?

Zill. Why, just what his name signifies, to be sure. You may meet old Wiseman at the corner of every street.

Per. And find him (if you search narrowly) in almost every pew at church.

Dr M. Where is he not? Luther used to say “every man had a pope in his inside.” I think every man has a Worldly Wiseman in his heart, urging the very same advice as the man in the allegory.

Har. Well, but he seems a pleasant sort of man enough.

Zill. Oh yes; very respectable indeed! And very wise in his own eyes!

Har. Why,—didn’t he tell Christian to get rid of his burden as soon as he could? That was all right, wasn’t it?

Dr M. No, it was all wrong. It was the best advice he could offer, however, seeing he was bred in “the town” of Carnal Policy. If he had been taught in *Spiritual* Policy, he would have told him to go straight to Jesus Christ, burden and all.

Mr S. Those, of whom this man is a type, are the greatest enemies to real religion in the world. By their influence they keep many half-awakened souls from salvation.

Mrs S. Their dislike of Bible reading, and their misrepresentation of religion as morose and gloomy, and full of horrors, is well brought out in Wiseman’s speeches.

Per. But what do they make of the new birth?

Dr T. To be born again is, with them, nothing more than to be baptized, or, at most, to become reformed from grosser sins, and outwardly moral in their conduct.

Mr S. And to believe in Christ is just to assent to a creed; and the work of the Spirit in the heart is only a figure of speech; and every preacher who, like Evangelist, warns men faithfully to flee from the wrath to come, is a Methodist and an impostor.

Dr M. And a common disturber, who ought to be put down by authority.

Per. Bunyan was misled by one of this sort, while under conviction, was he not?

Mrs S. I believe he was; but in striving to "get rid of his burden" that way, he only encountered greater distress.

Mr S. It was well for him it was so.—God would not let him rest in so fatal a snare.

Dr. M. And a happy thing, too, that he had the benefit of Mr. Gifford's preaching. If he had been under old Wiseman's favourite parson, the Rev. Moses Legality, he might have been deceived all his life.

Mrs S. An incalculable advantage is a faithful gospel ministry. We can never be grateful enough for it.

Zill. Well, papa, I have been thinking we can now understand what all this is about.

Mr S. All what?

Zill. This account of Christian's losing his way, and Evangelist's setting him right again.

Dr M. I should like much to hear the children expound it, while we seniors take the part of listeners.

Zill. Mr. Worldly Wiseman stands for all such as think that people should not be too religious. Not that they should be really wicked; but that they need not take pains to be more than just respectable, and well-behaved, and honest, and so on. And when they see any beginning to turn to God, they try to set them against a religious life: and seek to frighten them with stories about the hardships which they say they are sure to meet with. That is what Worldly Wiseman did with Christian.

Rho. Ah! but Christian knew better than all that, and would not mind him a bit; for he told him, "None of the things you mention are so terrible as this burden on my back."

Zill. But Christian believed him, nevertheless; for he set off towards Mr. Legality's directly, to ask him to help him off with his burden.

Per. That means, I suppose, that convinced persons always try first to save themselves, in some way, by their own righteousness, instead of Christ's.

Mr S. Very good. Go on.

Zill. But this will not do; as Christian found, when the burning mountain threatened to fall on him, and his burden became heavier and heavier. By which we are

taught, that the more we try to keep the commandments, in order to recommend ourselves to God, the worse our distress will become.

Har. And so Christian was very sorry he had not gone straight to the wicket gate, as Evangelist had told him; for the good minister, when he found him out of the way, was angry with him, and scolded him.

Rho. But dear, kind Evangelist was very compassionate, I am sure, for he smiled on him, and kissed him; and what good advice he gave him!

Zill. So he did afterwards. But at first he was very stern. And though poor Christian was half dead with fright already, he called for thunder and lightning out of the burning mountain. What can that mean? Why was Evangelist so hard upon him?

Mr S. Why? because he loved him.—When anxious souls are seeking to rest in duties or prayers, instead of coming to Christ, it is deeply injurious to talk to them in a soothing way. To tell them—as some might do out of mistaken kindness—that their doubts and fears are good signs,—that their efforts and tears will ensure God's favour,—that they have only to go on in this way, and wait till God visit them,—is to do them vast injury.

Dr M. Certainly a minister of the right stamp will not talk to burdened sinners that way; but he will faithfully warn them, that while as yet they have not believed in Christ, they are not interested in His salvation, but are still exposed to the curse of the law and the just wrath of Almighty God.

Then said Mr. Sidney to his children—"This is of so great importance, that I will get you to turn to the following passages. They shew the great sin and danger of not believing, or coming, at once, to Jesus Christ." John v. 40, xvi. 8, 9; Luke xii. 46; 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4; Rom. x. 3; Rev. xxi. 8; Matt. xiii. 19; Heb. iii. 12. This being done, Dr. Merrifield said to Harold, "What did the pilgrim do next?"

Har. He ran straight to the wicket-gate, and would not listen to any one, for fear he should lose the path.

Rho. Which is just what he should have done at first.

Mr S. We will not follow him now.—

We shall see him safe in at the gate next time.

Mrs S. Oh, what a glorious event that is in a man's history!

Mr S. It is indeed. But mark this well, dear children,—that not till then is the pilgrim a converted man. The pilgrim is not safe yet! All that he has undergone is insufficient to raise him out of his unregenerate state.

Dr M. Ah! how many come as far as this; and get no further!

Mr S. Take Evangelist's advice, then, immediately; and rest not till you have committed your souls, the youngest of you, to the care of that gracious Saviour who says, "Suffer little children to come to me, and forbid them not."

NEGLECT OF PRIVATE PRAYER.

It is the practice of some of the christianized Hottentots at one of the Mission stations, in order to enjoy the privilege of private prayer with greater privacy and freedom than they could do in their own confined dwellings, to retire among the trees and bushes in the vicinity; and, that they might carry on their devotions without being intruded on by others, and at the same time derive all that tranquilizing influence which would be produced by a spot with which no other thoughts were associated but such as are holy, each person selects for his own use, a particular bush, behind which he might pour out to God the pious breathings of his soul.

The rest considered this bush as an oratory, sacred to the brother or sister who had appropriated it, and which, therefore, was never to be violated by the foot or gaze of a stranger, during the season of occupancy by its proprietor. The constant tread of the worshippers in their diurnal visits to this hallowed spot, would of necessity wear a path in the thin grass which lay between their huts and the scene of their communication with God.

On one occasion, a Christian Hottentot woman said to a female member of the Church, "Sister I am afraid you are somewhat declining in your religion." The fear was expressed with a look of affection, and with a tone which savoured nothing of railing accusation, nor of reproachful severity, but altogether of tender fidelity. The

individual thus addressed, was too conscious of its truth to deny the fact, and too much melted by the meekness of wisdom with which the solicitude was expressed, to be offended, and meekly asked what led her friend to the opinion she had expressed.—"Because," said the other, "the grass has grown over your path to the bush."

The backslider fell under the rebuke, confessed that secret prayer had been neglected, and that her heart had been turned away from the Lord. The admonition thus given had its desired affect, and the faithful Hottentot had the satisfaction of restoring the wanderer, not only to the path to the bush, but to that God with whom she there communed in secret.

THY WILL BE DONE!

BY JOHN G. WHITTIER.

We see not, know not; all our way
Is night: with Thee alone is day.
From out the torrent's troubled drift,
Above the storm our prayer we lift,
Thy will be done!

The flesh may fail, the heart may faint,
But who are we to make complaint,
Or dare to plead in times like these
The weakness of our love of ease?
Thy will be done!

We take with solemn thankfulness
Our burden up, nor ask it less,
And count it joy that even we
May suffer, serve, or wait for Thee,
Whose will be done!

Though dim as yet in tint and line,
We trace Thy picture's wise design,
And thank Thee that our age supplies
The dark relief of sacrifice,
Thy will be done!

And if, in our unworthiness,
Thy sacrificial wine we press,
If from Thy ordeal's heated bars
Our feet are seamed with crimson scars,
Thy will be done!

If, for the age to come, this hour
Of trial hath vicarious power,
And, blest by Thee, our present pain
Be Liberty's eternal gain,
Thy will be done!

Strike, Thou, the Master, we Thy keys,
The anthem of the destinies!
The minor of Thy loftier strain
Our hearts shall breathe the old refrain,
Thy will be done!

Sabbath School Lessons.

October 12th.

ABRAHAM OFFERING ISAAC.—

GEN. XXII. 1-19.

I. *The trial of Abraham's faith.*—1st. The Author of the trial. The same almighty God who had of his own free grace bestowed upon Abraham this gift of faith in so eminent a degree, now puts it once more to the test. "God did tempt Abraham," but not as Satan tempts—by leading into sin; "For God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man," James i. 13. The word *tempt* is derived from a Latin verb which signifies "to prove;" and in this meaning it is used in the passage under consideration. When a sword is delivered to a soldier, it is not that it should hang as a useless ornament by his side, but that it should be used in the defence of his king and country. So when God endues any one with a particular grace, it is not that it should remain dormant and inactive in the recipient, but that it should be used to the praise of the glory of Divine grace. Whatever gracious principles the Lord may have wrought in the believer, depend upon it that they will be brought into active exercise. Circumstances will arise to admit of this. God is glorified in the trial of true faith. It was free grace that implanted faith in the believer's heart, and free grace keeps the heavenly plant from withering in this world's cold, ungenial clime. The effect of this trial on the Christian's faith, is quite the reverse of what one would naturally expect. The greater the storm of afflictions which the believer has to endure, the stronger becomes his faith. As the brawny arm of the blacksmith is strengthened by exercise, so true faith increases by temptation," Dan. xii. 10.

2. *The time of the trial.* Abraham had now grown old in the service of his Lord—he was the veteran of more than a hundred years. He was now in the enjoyment of prosperity. He had witnessed the fulfilment of the gracious promise formerly granted to him, in the birth of Isaac; and he looked forward with joyful anticipation to that time when, from that branch, there should have sprung as many as the sands of the sea in multitude. Surely now, when in the evening of his days, the Lord would permit him to enjoy a season of repose. So he may have thought. But the Lord had other things in store for him. By the trial of his faith, the highest monument of this Christian virtue was to be bequeathed by him to the Church of God.

3. *The trial itself.* The sacrifice was to be no bullock out of his house nor he-goat out of his folds, but Isaac the joy and the hope of

his old age. Observe how every circumstance is dwelt upon in the command which enhanced the value of the sacrifice. The offering was to be his son—his only son Isaac—his only son by Sarah.

II. *Abraham's obedience.* 1st. The difficulties which Abraham had to surmount in obeying the command. He might have refused to obey, on the ground that there was an antecedent law against shedding blood. Was the father of the faithful to be a murderer, and the most unnatural of murderers? 2. How should he ever be able to face Sarah, the affectionate mother, after the destruction of her darling son? After he had perpetrated such an act, would not Sarah's affections be alienated both from himself and from God? 3. The time that elapsed between the command and its fulfilment. He had three long days during which to reflect on every circumstance which could render obedience revolting to a father's heart, and had he conferred with flesh and blood—had he consulted his natural affections alone, this delay could only have added to his unwillingness to compliance. 4. His obedience manifested deliberation. He neglected not from any excitement of feeling to take with him the materials requisite to make a burnt-offering. "He rose up early in the morning and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and clave the wood for the burnt-offering, and went unto the place of which God had told him." 5. His obedience manifested prudence. It is probable that he kept the matter concealed from Sarah, in case she should have thrown any obstruction in his way. Her love for her son might have interfered with her duty to God. Nor did he disclose the object of his journey to the young men whom he had taken with himself and Isaac. Isaac being, in all probability, a young man of most amiable disposition, the young men would naturally have entertained towards him the greatest affection. The revealing to them of his intention regarding Isaac might consequently have led to an ill-timed interference on their part. Observe that Abraham told them that he and the lad would come to them again. He believed that God would either provide some animal as a substitute for Isaac, or that from his ashes he would, by His almighty power, raise him again to life; see Heb. xi. 19. 6. How must it have tried Abraham's faith when Isaac so innocently and unsuspectingly asked him concerning the lamb for a burnt-offering! Isaac addressed to him the tender words, "My father." O how must they in the circumstances have pierced that father's heart! It is probable that Abraham now disclosed to Isaac the nature of the required sacrifice. This we may infer from the fact that Isaac, at the most

painful part of this most trying ordeal, submitted to be bound and laid on the altar by his father without resistance. 6. The Divine interposition. The angel of the Lord called to him out of heaven. The word translated *angel*, means, in the original, a messenger—*one sent*. Our Saviour told the Jews that he *was sent* into the world, John x. 11; and again, God *sent* not his Son into the world to condemn the world, John iii. 17. The angel of the Lord who addressed Abraham was therefore the angel of the covenant, our blessed Saviour himself, the Lord Jesus Christ. 7. In Abraham's extremity the Lord appeared for his relief. Man's extremity is God's opportunity. Abraham's sorrow was turned into gladness. His beloved Isaac, in whose stead a substitute had been provided, was restored to his love; and by his act of faith he obtained not only the approbation but the applause of his heavenly Father. 8. "Now I know that thou fearest God," v. 12. By works was Abraham's faith made perfect. It is vain for any one to profess love to God, if he does not manifest his love by his works, so far as he has the power and opportunity. When circumstances render it impossible for us to evidence our faith and love by our works, the Lord accepts the willing mind. Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac, so clearly shown, was accepted by God for the deed. There was nothing which Abraham would have refused to part with for the sake of the Lord, Isaac, his only son, whom he loved. And if God in his generous love for us spared not his only and well-beloved Son, is there anything consistent with his own glory and our good that he would keep from us?—Rom. viii. 32.

- Learn—1st. That the Lord delights in trying the faith of his people.—Job vii. 17, 18.
 2nd. That the Lord sustains the believer under every trial.—1 Cor. x. 13.
 3rd. The Lord brings good to his people out of apparent evils.—Rom. viii. 28.
 4th. God's love of his church.—John iii. 16.

Pictures for the Children.

ABRAHAM OFFERING ISAAC.

You may remember of reading in one of your former lessons of Abraham and Sarah, when they were both old and well stricken in years, one day entertaining three angels under a tree beside their tent, when they dwelt in the plains of Mamre. One of these angels, who turned out to be the Lord, told them just as He was leaving, that they would have a son not long after. All God's words are sure, and so it was here, they had a son whom

they named Isaac; and through this Isaac God had promised them a numerous seed.

Abraham and Sarah were much respected wherever they went, for they were not only very rich, but also upright and godly. They were both very old, and expected soon to go down to the grave, but they were happy; they had Isaac now, about twenty years old, budding into manhood, who would inherit their all. Time passed pleasantly over the inmates of that happy home. Sarah was delighted to see her son increasing in stature, and in knowledge from year to year. And Abraham, no doubt, felt proud when he walked out into his orchard at Beersheba, or visited his flocks in company with his Isaac, telling him of all his adventurous sojournings, of his visits from angels, and what they said; of the smoking furnace and burning lamp, that passed between the pieces of his sacrifice, and of the Lord appearing to him in terrible grandeur and saying, "I am the Almighty God, walk before me, and be thou perfect." But while this delightful calm pervades the tents of Abraham, he receives the strange command from God, "Take now thy son, thine only son, Isaac, whom thou lovest and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." What a command was this! Every clause seems calculated to make Abraham rebel. It is not take thy servant, but *thy son*, and not simply a son, but *thine only son*, thy Isaac, whom thou lovest. And what is he to do with so much that was dear? Not to send him into the woods as he had done with Ishmael. This would have been bad enough for his parental heart to bear. Neither is he commanded to give him up that another might sacrifice him to Jehovah, but to go himself into the land of Moriah, and offer Isaac for a burnt offering. No one will do for the altar but Isaac, and no one must be the priest but Abraham. Any one but an Abraham would have reasoned thus, Whence shall the promised nation come if Isaac is to die? Shall not the very heathen despise me if I put my own son to death? And if he must die can no one be got to perform the bloody act but Abraham, his father? An ordinary man might have met the command with such thoughts as these; but, when God gave the command, He knew He had to do with an Abraham, and Abraham, when he heard it, knew that he had to do with a God, even Jehovah. And Abraham's silence on this occasion shows him to great advantage.—When he heard of his friends being in imminent danger in Sodom, he drew near unto the Lord and reasoned with him in prayer, "Wilt thou destroy the righteous with the wicked? That be far from thee to do after this manner;" but when he is himself to be the suffer-

ing party, he assents in silence. Well did he deserve to be called the friend of God.— Friends require few explanations, and true friends have faith in one another, that the one will not ask the other to do anything to the hurt of either. Abraham stops not to reason, but hastens to obey. Next morning sees him up at day-break, saddling his ass and chopping the wood for the burnt-offering; and ere the sun has risen high in the east with two of his young men and his darling son he is on his way to the mountains of Moriah. For two days they journey northwards, over the hills of Judah, passing Hebron on their way. During this long march, any one but the father of the faithful, after thinking so long over the object of the journey, would have been apt to have hesitated and turned back, but no; it is Abraham we are speaking of, and the third day brings him in sight of the appointed place. Skirting the northern horizon, he beholds the mountain of Moriah, of which God had told him. His heart beats at the sight. The awful reality of the approaching act creeps over his soul, but it is God that commands it, and "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right." But that his servants may have no opportunity given to interrupt him, they are not allowed to witness the scene, for to the two young men he says, "Abide ye here with the asses, while I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you." He now lifts the wood which they had laid down, and placed it upon Isaac, his son, while he takes the knife and the firepan in his own hand. Onward they go, Isaac, a striking picture of a greater. Abraham's only son, whom he loved, is carrying the wood to which he is to be bound, even as God's only begotten, and well-beloved son afterwards carried out to Calvary, the tree to which he was to be nailed. But as he and his aged father proceed, Isaac stops, for he has made the discovery that they are not prepared to sacrifice,—"Father," he says, "behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" Touching words these! They go home to his father's heart; but he simply answers, "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering." This remark was sufficient for the Chaldean's son, "so they went, both of them together." And my young friends just go with them to the mountain top if you would behold that deed which was done, which was well done, and yet was never done. Which shall you admire most, Abraham or Isaac? Isaac is let into the terrible secret, but he repines not, for it is his Father in heaven, asking his father on earth to send him home. The altar is built. And where can you find a better picture of a noble youth dedicating himself to the service of God? See him as he stands there taking the last look at the bright shining sun above his head, and the blue mountains of Ephraim in the north, and the green woods of Judah, where his home lay, in the south, as Jordan on the east, rushed past into the Dead Sea, murmuring as it ran. We can fancy him in the full freshness of youth looking at all these glorious prospects, and then gazing into the dewy eye of his trembling father, bid him farewell, and calmly lay himself down to die, without one murmuring word. But as you look, the scene thickens. That venerable old man is binding that lovely youth, his own image, upon the altar, with the fire that is to consume him blazing at his feet. Had a stranger happened to cross Mount Moriah at this critical time, when Abraham stooped over Isaac with the knife still undefiled, but gleaming in his hand, as it descended to the work, although he had been the most hardened wretch that trod the earth, would he not have rushed forward, and flung himself in between Isaac and the knife, with the words, "Wilt thou dare to plunge that knife into the ruddy stripling, thy son? Earth never has and never shall witness such a spectacle."— Do you think common humanity would have thus interposed? Certainly it would and God is not worse than man. This is the very thing He did. How should He, whose name is "gracious and merciful," look on and see Abraham his merciful, put to death his son, whose birth had been to him a second and his best jubilee. He had sent His angel to hover round that mountain, and to watch eagerly every step of the tragedy. And at the very crisis when Abraham, having dismissed all ideas of escape, had nerved himself, soul and body, to the utmost to sink the affection of a parent in the command of his Maker, the voice came like sweet music from the celestial gate, "Abraham, Abraham, lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him; for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from Me." God knew this before, but this is the way He took to let all the world know it too. God loveth obedience better than sacrifice, and Abraham having yielded it with his whole nature, a ram will now be accepted at his hands. And God is so well pleased with him that He even provides him that for his own altar, for "Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold behind him a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt-offering, in the stead of his son," who now stands worshipping by the altar. Well might the patriarch call the name of the place Jehovah-jireh—the Lord will provide. There, the Lord provided

way of escape for Abraham, by providing a ram for the sacrifice. And as He showed Himself then, so He has done in all ages.—At the moment of difficulty God never fails to appear to His people. He often brings them into straits to try their faith and display His goodness, as He did with Abraham. About four hundred years after this event, we have another striking instance of this, His plan of procedure. God led the children of Israel, Abraham's seed, out of Egypt to the shores of the Red Sea, where he shut them in with insurmountable difficulties; where they could only stand still and see the salvation of God. He opened up a highway, through the waves, for them to march to Canaan.

But having surveyed Abraham's work, listen to the angel of the Lord as he speaks again, and you will hear his reward, "By myself I sworn saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore, and shall possess the gate of his enemies: and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed My voice." He could now return to his young men, at the foot of the mountain, and with them to his home, with a full and joyous heart. His ordeal had been singular and severe, but he had a rare and rich recompense in return. His sons were to be first among the nations, numerous as the countless sands of ocean, and the Son of Righteousness was to rise with healing under his wings for all the tribes of earth.

Abraham lost nothing by obedience and resignation, in time of trial, and no man ever will. The people of God may expect to meet with temptations,

"For though their barks can not be lost,
Yet they may be tempest toss'd."

And why fret because of storms? They purify the atmosphere. If ever called upon to pass through fire and water, remember that it is that you may be led to the wealthy place, where "in God's presence there is fulness of joy, and at His right hand there are pleasures for evermore." If the burden of life be heavy, shall you not console yourself with the thought that the way is short.

X. Y. Z.

October 19th, 1861.

THE CURE OF THE LEPER AND PARALYTIC,—
Mark i. 40-45. Luke v. 17-26.

I. "And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and

saying unto him, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean," Mark i. 40. Of all the diseases to which fallen man is subject that of leprosy may truly be said to be the most hideous and loathsome. In this dreadful malady the skin loses its natural colour and becomes white as snow. Ulcers frequently appear in different parts of the body.—The wretched patient, in his waking hours is distressed with excruciating pains; and his hours of sleep are disturbed with direful dreams. With his clothes rent, and his head bare, the leper was required by the law, to put a covering on his lip and to cry, "Unclean, unclean." Add to this that the leper was denied all intercourse with his fellows—excepting, indeed, such as were in the same mournful plight as himself—that he could hold no sweet communion with the wife of his bosom, and could not be cheered by the prattling of his babes, and a more melancholy object, than he, can hardly be conceived. "He shall dwell alone, without the camp shall his habitation be." Lev. xiii. 46. The fame of the miracles of Jesus had reached the ears of the leprous man, of whom we read in the passage under consideration, even in his seclusion. In hearing of the wonders wrought by Jesus, the thought had struck him that this Prophet, so mighty in word and in deed, had power to heal even him. The hope scarce entertained at first, by being cherished, warmed into faith: Jesus could heal him.—But though he did not doubt the power of Christ to aid him, would the Lord be willing to exert that power on his behalf? Would the Lord compassionate so vile an object?—The leper doubted this. And are there not many poor sinners—spiritual lepers—who judge of Jesus in the same way as did this sufferer? Leprosy, and its treatment under the Mosaic economy, was typical of sin, and the effects of sin—that spiritual leprosy from which, by nature, there is no man free. The disease of leprosy covered the whole body; and there is no faculty of the mind, no desire or affection of the heart, which in our natural state is not under the dominion of sin, Isa. i. 6. Lepers were cut off from the rest of society as unclean; and until the guilt and dominion of sin are removed, we are excluded from communion with a heavenly Father—"the Author of every good and every perfect gift." And when we are awakened to a sense of our sinful and lost condition, under the law, we are all prone, like the leper, to doubt the compassion of the Saviour. The sinner hears of many who have been freely justified by Jesus, and whose hearts have been changed by his grace, but he fears that this grace cannot extend to him. "My sins," thinks he, "have been too great, and of too aggravated a nature, Jesus cannot have mercy upon me."—The leper came to Jesus. By coming he had

nothing to lose, and if Jesus had compassion on him he had the cure of his awful disease and restoration to health, to gain. Let the greatest sinner imitate him. Go to Jesus and resolve that if you perish you will perish there.

II. "And Jesus moved with compassion, put forth his hand and touched him, and saith unto him, I will, be thou clean." v. 41. We can conceive the anxiety of the poor leper as the moment drew nigh which was to decide his fate—how his heart beat almost audibly—and how in his intense excitement, he had scarcely voice to utter his petition, "Lord if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." But how quickly all his doubts, all his fears, were dispelled! His eyes beaming with compassion, and in accents sweet, the Lord at once replied, "I will, be thou clean." And no sooner had Jesus spoken than immediately his leprosy left him, v. 42. Mark the difference in the manner in which Jesus performed his miracles, and his disciples performed theirs.—The latter wrought their works by a power not their own—in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, Acts iii. 6. Jesus wrought by his own inherent power. He had merely to express the volition and the thing was done.—How manifest is the Divinity of our blessed Saviour here! "Immediately the leprosy departed from him." Jesus has power to heal the deadliest—the most incurable disease, whether of body or of soul: and if he has the power he has no less the will. What though our sins be great, the love of Christ is infinitely greater, Rom. v. 21. We may search the scriptures from Genesis to Revelation—we may search all human experience, and we shall not find one instance of a sincere and earnest prayer being rejected by our gracious Saviour. How amply did the result compensate the leper for any little difficulties he may have experienced in coming to Christ! The leper had probably some distance to travel before he could lay his case under our Saviour's personal notice. We have no such difficulty to encounter. We know that the Lord is everywhere present, able and willing to hear and answer the prayer of faith. And how many do we see around us, who joyfully bear testimony both to his will and power to save?

III. "And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man," v. 44. Our Lord enjoined silence upon the subjects of his miraculous cures most probably as a means of self-preservation. True no one could harm him till that time came in which he said that he should be "lifted up," foretelling the manner of his death. Nevertheless our Saviour neglected no legitimate means of avoiding danger, in obedience to the command, Deut. vi. 16, "But he went out and began to pub-

lish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter," v. 45. We can scarcely blame him. Who does not know that there is a desire in man to promulgate anything wonderful which has happened to him? The leper, too, would scarcely have been able to conceal the joy which he experienced on his restoration to health. The consequence of his imprudence, however, was that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city. But there is no such restraint laid upon those on whom our Lord performs his spiritual cures. It is our duty to publish his grace according to our opportunities and abilities, that by showing great things the Lord has done for our souls we may be the happy instruments of winning others to him likewise, Psa. li. 13. John i. 41.

IV. "Go thy way, shew thyself to the Priest," &c. By precept and example our Lord enjoined on his followers a strict conformity, not only with the moral law, but also with the ceremonial law of Moses; though he knew that the latter was soon to be abrogated by his death, Eph. ii. 15. Christians should carefully study the types and ceremonies of the Mosaic economy. It is true that we no longer need priests, sacrifices, altars and vestments. To require the re-institution of these things after their abolition by our Saviour, is like lighting a candle at noon-day. But by their careful and prayerful study, we obtain increase of light on the doctrines taught us in the New Testament.

V. "And behold men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy," &c. Luke v. 18. Mark informs us that this paralytic was borne by four men. From the multitude of people within and around the house attending our Lord's ministrations, they could not get admission in the ordinary way. They therefore ascended to the top of the house, and let the sick man "down through the tiling, with his couch, into the midst before Jesus." There were present "Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem," v. 17. We may observe that the houses in the East were of a different construction from ours. From the description of the Jewish houses, given by Josephus, it is believed that they were, in the time of our Saviour, very much the same as they are at the present day. The Eastern houses of the better sort are generally of one storey; as the Orientals dislike stairs. The walls are lofty and form four sides of a square, and a large open area is in the midst of the house. In this area were assembled the multitudes who were attending the instructions of Jesus. The roofs of the houses were, of course, flat. Observe what pains the friends of the sick man took to lay him before Jesus. When men once believe that a thing is worth obtaining

HOW TO READ THE BIBLE WITH SPIRITUAL PROFIT.

I. If you would profit by reading, *remove those things that will hinder your profiting*. That the body may thrive, obstructions must be removed. There are three obstructions must be removed, if you will profit by Scripture.

1. Remove the love of every sin. Let a physician prescribe ever so good receipts, if the patient takes poison it will hinder the virtue and operation of the physic. The Scriptures prescribe excellent recipes, but sin lived in, poisons all. The body cannot thrive in a fever, nor can the soul under the feverish heat of lust. Plato calls the love of sin *magnus demon*, a great devil. As the rose is destroyed by the canker which breeds in it, so are the souls of men by those sins in which they indulge.

2. Take heed of those thorns which will choke the word read. These thorns our Saviour expounds to be the cares of this world. By "*cares*" is meant *covetousness*. A covetous man hath such diversity of secular employment that he can scarce find time to read, or, if he doth, what solecisms doth he commit in reading! While his eye is upon the Bible, his heart is upon the world: it is not the writings of the apostles he is so much taken up with, as the writing in his account-books, Is this man like to profit? You may as soon extract oil and syrup out of a flint, as he any real benefit out of Scripture.

3. Take heed of jesting with Scripture: this is playing with fire. Some cannot be merry unless they make bold with God; when they are sad, they bring forth Scripture as their harp to drive away the evil spirit, as that drunkard who, having emptied his cups, calls to his fellows, "Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out." In the fear of God beware of this. King Edward IV. would not endure to have his crown jested with, but caused him to be executed who said *he would make his son heir to the crown*, meaning the sign of the crown on his tavern. Much less will God endure to have his word jested with. Eusebius relates of one who took a piece of Scripture to jest with, that God struck him with frenzy. The Lord may justly give over such persons to a *reprobate mind*. Rom. i. 28,

they will spare themselves no pains in seeking acquisition. In spiritual things as well as in temporal, the law is, that he who labours most shall gain the most. How is it that we see so many, active enough in worldly respects, bestowing little or no time or attention to the means of grace? How do we find so few comparatively enquiring after Jesus? Just because they feel not their need of him.— "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Because, too, being wholly taken up with the things of sense they realise not spiritual truths. The friends of the paralytic being alive to his distressing condition, and fully aware of the importance of the benefit they desired to obtain, thought no trouble too great to take, to bring him to the Lord.

VI. "And when he saw their faith he said unto him, 'Man thy sins are forgiven thee.'— Had our Saviour been, as the blinded Pharisees supposed, a mere man, this would have been indeed a blasphemous expression. None but God has power to forgive sins. "It is God that justifieth." Jesus must therefore have been God. O, how fraught with comfort is this doctrine to the believer. At the same time that he is bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, our Saviour is the Almighty God.

VII. "But when Jesus perceived their thoughts," &c. v. 22. Here we have another proof of the Divinity of Christ. It is God who searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins. How very watchful should we be over the thoughts of our hearts, from the consideration that Jesus is cognizant of them all.

VIII. "But that ye may know," &c. Our Saviour evinces, by ocular demonstration, his power to forgive sins, by healing at a word the sick of the palsy. Thus he had higher testimony than that of John. The Father Himself bore witness to the truth of his doctrine.

Learn 1. Jesus has power to heal all diseases whether spiritual or temporal.—Matt. xxviii. 18.

2. Jesus has not only the power, but the will to heal all that come to him by faith.—2 Pet. iii. 9.

3. We should be very earnest in seeking after Christ.—Luke xiii. 24. 2 Pet. i. 10.

4. Jesus has power to forgive sins.—2 Cor. v. 10.

5. Jesus knows our secret thoughts.—Psa. cxxix. 2. Heb. iv. 13.

FIFTY THE FOUNDATION OF POLITENESS.—Let me be free from anxiety about the honour which is from men, and resign myself to the benevolence of the gospel, and I secure two capital ingredients of pleasant manners.—Chalmers.

II. If you would profit, *prepare your hearts to the reading of the word.* The heart is an instrument that needs putting in tune. 1 Sam. vii. 3: "Prepare your hearts to the Lord." The heathen, as Plutarch notes, thought it indecent to be too hasty or rash in the service of their supposed deities. This preparation for reading consists in two things:

1. In summoning our thoughts together to attend to that solemn work we are going about. The thoughts are stragglers therefore rally them together. 2. In purging out those unclean affections which do indispose us to reading. Before we come to the water of life, let us cast away the poison of impure affections. Many come rashly to the reading of the word; and no wonder if they come without preparation, they go away without profit.

III. *Read the Scripture with reverence.* Think, every line you read, God is speaking to you. The ark wherein the law was put was overlaid with pure gold, and was carried on bars, that the Levites might not touch it. Why was this, but to breed in the people reverence to the law? When Ehud told Eglon he had a message to him from God, he arose from his throne.—(Judges iii. 20.) The word written is a message from Jehovah: with what veneration should we receive it!

IV. *Read the books of Scripture in order.* Though occurrences may sometimes divert our method, yet, for a *constant course*, it is best to observe an order in reading. Order is a help to memory.—We do not begin to read a friend's letter in the middle.

V. *Get a right understanding of Scripture.* Psalm cxix. 73: "Give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments." Though there are some knots in Scripture which are not easily united, yet things essential to salvation the Holy Ghost hath plainly pointed out to us. The knowledge of the sense of the Scriptures is the first step to profit. In the Law, Aaron was first to light the lamps, and then to burn the incense; the lamp of the understanding must be first lighted before the affections can be inflamed. Get what knowledge you can by comparing Scripture,

by conferring with others, by using the best annotators. Without knowledge the Scripture is a *sealed book*; every line is too high for us; and if the word shoot above our head, it can never hit our heart.

VI. *Read the word with seriousness.*—If one go over the Scripture cursorily, says Erasmus, there is little good to got by it; but if he be serious in reading it, it is the savor of life; and well may we be serious if we consider the importance of those truths which are bound up in this sacred volume. Deut. xxxii. 47.; "It is not a vain thing for you: it is your life." If a letter were to be broken open and read, wherein a man's whole estate were concerned, how serious would he be in reading it! In the Scripture our salvation is concerned; it treats of the love of Christ, a serious subject. Christ hath loved mankind more than the angels that fell. (Hob. ii. 7.) The loadstone, indifferent to gold and pearl, draws the iron to it: thus Christ passed by the angels, who were of more noble extraction, and drew mankind to him. Christ loved us more than his own life; nay, though we had a hand in his death, yet he did not leave us out of his will. This is a love that *passeth knowledge*: who can read this without seriousness? The Scriptures speak of the mystery of faith, the eternal recompense, and the paucity of them that shall be saved. Matt. xx. 16: "Few chosen." One saith the names of all the good emperors of Rome might be engraved in a little ring; there are but (comparatively) few names in the Book of Life. The Scriptures speak of striving for heaven as in agony. (Luke xiii. 24.) It cautions us of falling short of the promised rest. (Heb. iv. 1.) It describes the horrors of the infernal torments, the worm and the fire. (Mark ix. 44.) Who can read this and not be serious? Some have light, feathery spirits; they run over the most weighty truths in haste, (like Israel who eat the Passover in haste,) and they are not benefited by the word. Read with a solemn, composed spirit. *Seriousness* is the Christian's ballast, which keeps him from being overturned with vanity.—[Rev. Thomas Watson, A. M.]

STORIES FROM THE BOOK.

FOR THE LITTLE ONES

CHRIST RIDING INTO JERUSALEM LUKE XIX. 29-38
AND MAT. XXI. 1-11,

On eastern side of Olivet
A little vilage lay,
To which the wearied preacher oft
Retired at close of day.
As sombre ev'ning cool and still
Redimmed the azure sky,
With wondering crowds from Jericho,
He thitherward drew nigh.
Martha and Mary's tower that night
Could boast of honour great,
For in their lowly hamlet lay
The King of peerless state.
It was the Great Deliverer,
Messiah long foretold,
Whom priests, and saints, and seers, & lords
Had often sung of old.
The Shiloh, Branch, and Jacob's star,
The Virgin's promised son,
The woman's seed, and David's Lord,
The wonder working one.
By Barachiah's propnet son
The promise had been given,
That to be priced & pierced would come
Zion's king—the king of Heaven.
"O daughter of Jerusalem sing,
Rejoice and him extol,
For riding on an ass he comes—
Upon an ass's foal.
Though drest in lowly garb he's rich,
He's meek, & he is just,
Salvation full and free he brings"
For all that in him trust.
Thus ran the old prediction;
Fulfillment was at hand;
Rejoicing crowds already stood
To be his menial band.
Assise is drawn the gloomy veil
Of dark and silent night,
And Judah's landscapes stand revealed
All battled in golden light.
Among her vine clad terraces
The early warblers sing,
And bees among the dewy flowers
Are humming on the wing.
Jesus has left his humble couch
And two disciples sent
To Bethpäge, where an ass stood tied,
Which ne'er 'neath yoke had bent.
This they were told to loose at once
And to their master lead,
To say if asked "why do ye thus?"
"The Lord of him hath need."
This argument would be enough,
What man could it gainsay?
The Lord, from whom he all things had,
But asks his ass a gay,
Away they sped, at all times glad
To reverence his command,
The town they entered, there they saw
The colt and mother stand.
The young ass they at once unloose,
The owners ask them "Why?"
And they, as by the saviour taught,
Immediately reply.
The reason all-sufficient was,
The colt they brought along
To Bethany, where assembled was
A vast and motley throng.
Jesus they placed upon the ass,
Which for a saddle had

The robes of some, who, thus allowed
To honor him, were glad.
Slowly they now began to move
Up Olivet's eastern side,
See 'mid them, on a borrowed ass,
The Prince of Salem ride.
Before him went the shouting mob,
Who pioneered his way;
Where garments and green olive boughs
In honor thickly lay.
The young, the old, and all between,
In concert joined the cry,
Hosanna loud, to David's Son,
Re-echoed through the sky.
Jerusalem heard triumphant shouts,
Like thunder rend the air,
She stood amazed, and eastward gazed,
Divining what was there.
Mount Olivet had on its brow
A living, shouting mass,
And there in triumph rode *The Christ*,
Upon a lowly ass.
He saw her crested, gilded spires,
Her towers ascending high,
Yet no eulogiums left his lips,
But from his heart a sigh.
His eye beheld her future doom,
Her towers and turrets fall,
And Roman eagles planted thick
Around the city wall;
Her busiest streets deserted,
He saw, all grown with grass,
And ghastly skeletons he heard,
Upon them moaning pass.
For through the future vista,
His prophet eye had swept,
And while the multitudes rejoiced,
Jesus, the *God-man*, wept.
The angels thronged the jasper walls,
And stooped his tears to scan,
Here sinner also view *The Son*,
A sympathizing man.
The intervening vale they've passed,
And forded Kedron's rill.
And now with joyful steps they've gained
Jerusalem—Zion's hill.
Let Israel's virgins shout again,
And heathen maidens too,
To swell the triumph of the King,
Of Gentile and of Jew.

DALETH.

NAPANEE, 22nd September.

NEARER!

One sweetly solemn thought
Comes to me o'er and o'er;
I'm nearer my home to-day
Than I've ever been before.

Nearer my Father's house,
Where the many mansions be;
Nearer the great white throne,
Nearer the jasper sea.

Nearer the bound of life
Where we lay our bardens down;
Nearer leaving my cross,
Nearer wearing my crown.

TRUE PRAYERS NEVER LOST.

BY REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER.

It is hard to believe that the fervent prayer of the righteous man is ever lost. The answer may be long delayed. It may come in a manner wholly unlooked for.—The return of the prayer may be such that it may not be recognized by the devout soul who uttered it. But it is not lost.

1. For example, there are some prayers which we cannot expect to see answered immediately. I was at a monthly concert last evening, where God's people were pleading with him for the conversion of the world. None of that praying company had any expectation of living to see the day when the last heathen nation should surrender to the victorious Jesus. Yet their petitions will never be forgotten.—Those pleading disciples will yet behold the glorious fulfillment of their desires from the battlements of heaven. For in our own experience we have seen many a prayer manifestly answered long after the saint who breathed it into the ear of the Saviour has gone to lay his weary head on that Saviour's breast.

A dying mother commits her beloved boy to a covenant-keeping God. She has often borne that child on the arms of faith to the mercy seat. He has been the child of many prayers; and in the feeble utterances of her passing spirit another and a last petition is breathed forth that Christ would have mercy on his soul. Years roll away. The sod has grown green, and the rank grass has long waved over that mother's tomb. In some distant land—mayhap hundreds of miles from that spot—a full-grown man, who has long been ripening in sin, is seen bowed in prayer.—He is crying out of an agonized heart, *God be merciful to me a sinner!* Behold he prayeth, and his prayer is the answer of the fervent petitions which his dying mother uttered many long years before.—Her requests were recorded in God's book of remembrance; and but for them we know not that the prayer of that penitent son would ever have ascended there. Let praying fathers and mothers never grow faint of heart. Let desponding churches—long unvisited by revival blessings—only close up their ranks more compactly about

the mercy seat, and besiege heaven with new importunity. For above the dark cloud of their discouragement is written in the clear, upper sky, "He that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

2. Other prayers are answered at the time of their utterance, but in a way so unlooked for that he who offered them is inclined to think that the very opposite of what he asked for has befallen him. One individual prays, for instance, that he may be enabled to glorify God. Ere he is aware, some tremendous calamity comes crashing down upon him, prostrating him to the dust. His fortune is swept away. Or his schemes of promotion are blasted. A favorite child is missed from the cradle or the hearthstone. His hopes are withered like grass. God has answered his prayer, but has answered it, as the Psalmist says, "by terrible things." From under the overwhelming pressure of affliction he flees to Jesus, his divine comforter, and how his love is kindled by the contact.—How his latent faith is called forth! How he glorifies God in the furnace of trial which is purging away the dross of selfishness and worldliness, and making his pure gold to shine with tenfold brightness!

We once saw an earnest enquirer who was praying most importunately for faith in Christ, and for peace to his troubled soul. But while he prayed a cloud of darkness gathered across his horizon.—And against that cloud which swung like a funeral pall before his vision played the sharp lightnings of the Almighty's wrath. The thunder of God's law roared against him, like the death-dealing guns of our frigates against the walls of those sea-coast fortresses of Hattens. Instead of peace came only the sword. Instead of the calm he sought came the fearful tempest; and under the stress of its terrors the poor, baffled soul betakes himself to the "covert" which Christ has raised on Calvary. There he finds the peace he so earnestly prayed for. There the long-sought confidence in Jesus pours its fulness through the soul. His prayer was answered—first by terrible things, but at last by the very blessings which he desired. And without that storm the calm would have never come. Had the sinner not been led to that frightful view

of his own guilt and condemnation, he might never have gone to Christ, and thus could not have known the true abiding peace. As he looks back over the dark valley of sorrow through which the divine hand has wondrously led him, and sees that no other way would so surely bring him to the Cross, he feels a renewed assurance that no true prayer is ever lost; he now knows that he that asketh a right will always receive, and he that seeketh will surely find. His experience is worth all it cost him.

3. Once more let us remark that the petitions of believers are often answered according to their *intention*, and not according to the strict letter of the request. The utterer of the prayer sought only the glory of God, but in his ignorance asked for wrong things. God hears and answers him; but the blessing granted is something very different from what the believer expected. The case of Paul is a beautiful illustration of this. He is sorely afflicted by a "thorn in the flesh." What the precise nature of the affliction was, we know not. Perhaps it was a severe malady; perhaps a besetting sin; perhaps a mortifying deformity of body or of character.— He beseeches God in three earnest petitions that this "thorn" might depart from him. His prayers are heard. They are answered. But instead of the removal of the thorn comes the cheering assurance, "My grace is sufficient for thee." The Lord does not take away the trial, but gives him all that is needed to make it endurable; thus the divine glory and Paul's spiritual well-being were more certainly advanced than if the prayer had been answered strictly according to its letter.

The prayer was not lost. That God hears every sincere prayer, who can doubt? The skeptic must seal his vision, lest, coming to the light, he shall be persuaded against himself. He must mutilate or destroy the shining record of God's providential dealings with the children of faith. He must erase from the Bible the animating narrative of Jacob's midnight struggles, the thrilling scenes of Elijah's wrestlings at Carmel and at Zarephath, the "evening oblations" of Daniel, and the angelic deliverance of Peter from the prison-cell.— He must destroy many a leaf from the Christian's diary, on which devout grati-

tude has written, "This day I learned anew that my heavenly Father hears and answers prayer." He must give the lie to Omniscient Love, which has uttered in the ear of all the needy, sorrowing, guilty household of humanity, "Ask and ye shall receive; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you."—"And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son."

AN OLD HYMN.

[In the life of Rev. Andrew Fuller, the following hymn is referred to as being a favourite of that eminent man during the latter penesive years of his life, and especially as being often repeated while pacing his room in the agonies of his last illness.]

I sojourn in a vale of tears,
Alas ! how can I sing?
My harp doth on the willows hang,
Distuned in every string.
My music is a captive's chain;
Harsh sounds my ears do fill;
How shall I sing sweet Zion's song,
On this side Zion's hill ?

Come, then, my ever dearest Lord,
My sweetest, surest friend,
Come, for I loathe these Kedar tents,
Thy fiery chariot send.
What have I here ? my thoughts and joys
Are all before me gone;
My eager soul would follow them,
To thine eternal throne.

What have I in this barren land?
My Jesus is not here ;
Mine eyes will ne'er be blest until
My Jesus doth appear.
My Jesus is gone up to heaven,
To gain a place for me;
For 'tis His will that where He is,
There shall His servant be.

Canaan I view from Pisgah's top,
Its grapes are my repast;
My Lord who sends unto me here,
Will send for me at last.
I have a God that changeth not,
Why should I be perplexed?
My God that owns me in this world
Will own me in the next.

Go fearless, then, my soul, with God
 Into another room,
 Thou who hast journeyed with Him there
 Go feast with him at home.
 View death with a believing eye,
 It hath an angel's face;
 And this kind angel wilt prefer
 Thee to an angel's place.

My dearest friends—they dwell above;
 Them will I go and see;
 And all my friends in Christ below
 Will soon come after me.
 Fear not the trump's earth-rending sound,
 Dread not the day of doom;
 For He that is to be thy judge
 Thy Saviour has become.

NEWS OF THE CHURCHES.

The Wesleyan Conference completed its series of meetings about the middle of last month. The most remarkable feature was the report by Dr. Jobson of the state of the churches in the Australian Colonies. Methodism has shown itself to be well adapted to the virgin soil of Australia, by the rapidity with which it has spread out its roots in all directions—Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, the Gold Fields, and even the thinly-populated districts of the large sheep-farms. It has grown up perhaps more rapidly than any other form of Protestantism, and it still continues to make steady advances. The home-reports were generally favourable. The most important movement at home, discussed at the recent meeting, was for the building of a number of new metropolitan churches. It is now determined to give increased and very special attention to London. The death of the Bishop of Durham has been deeply mourned, by both evangelical Churchmen and Dissenters. None of the bishops was more generally known and beloved than he, and many years of faithful labour were expected from him in the important diocese to which he had recently been elevated.

In Scotland it has been determined not to appeal to the House of Lords against the recent decision in the Cardross case, but to await the trial of the last issue, which regards the contract.

The sudden death of Dr. Stahl—one of the great leaders of the High Church party in Germany, and one of the most able speakers of the day—has created much sensation in the Prussian Church. He was a Jew by birth, always an earnest and devoted man; after his conversion to Christianity, an exceedingly clear, quick, logical speaker. In the Kirchentag, as long as he remained attached to it, he was the ruling mind, bringing the deliberations to a point in a moment when other speakers were floundering on in mist or darkness. Though a professor of law, he devoted much attention to theology, and was

more determined in his defence of the plenary inspiration of Scripture and of purity of doctrine, than almost any other of his German contemporaries. He opposed strenuously, and exposed with great ability, the *Bibelwerk* of Baron Bunsen, so full of the worst elements of scepticism, however well-intended it may have been by its author. His views of doctrine were ultra-Lutheran, and his politics most despotic. A great man in Israel has, however, passed away, who contended much for the defence of truth against the levelling and material scepticism of the age.

The state of things remains unchanged in Italy. Rome is not evacuated, and Naples, though greatly improved under the rule of Ciadini, continues to be disturbed. The reactionary party are also attempting to send bands of brigands into Tuscany. It is high time that these crimes, committed under the protection of the so-called party of order, should be brought to an end. The Pope is sinking deeper and deeper into the mire of the encouragement of these abominable plots. Our correspondent draws attention to a fact too much forgotten, that the mass of the people of Italy are still attached devotedly to many superstitions of the Papacy, however much they may detest the politics of the upper clergy. Many of the church observances, especially in Italy, have an æsthetic attraction which binds them to this imaginative people. As the ancient Greeks crowded heaven with the gods and goddesses of a cultivated imagination, the Italians have peopled it, by the aid of their painters and other men of genius, with beautiful images of the Virgin and the saints, of the Lord himself, and even of the Father; and they cling to these sensuous images. No reformation can take place, except by the blessing of God on the study of His word, in raising the spiritual above the sensuous, and destroying such degrading materials of a corrupt system. Care must be taken to substitute the true for the false, and not, by a mere work of destruction, to drive the people from bad to worse, to materialistic infidelity.

We continue to receive the most encouraging accounts of the progress of the American missions in Turkey. The letters of Dr. Dwight, especially, describe most vividly the changes effected in many of the cities. Large, earnest, Christian communities are springing up in all the important cities of Asiatic Turkey. The Nestorians have come forward nobly to the help of the Society in its emergency, and have contributed very largely in proportion to their means. Whole villages seem to have been affected by this spirit of liberality. We would again press upon our readers the importance of at present giving liberally in support of these missions. A correspondent of the "Patriot" suggests, that "by a united and strenuous effort the churches of this country might take up this mission,

for at least one year." This is, perhaps, too much to expect. But most liberal aid ought to be given in the emergency. If any one wishes to see sure and immediate fruit from his liberality, he cannot give to a better cause. We are glad to know that our former appeal was not without effect; but we hope that aid will continue to pour in, to a much larger extent than ever.

We have received a copy of a comprehensive paper on the Indigo question, addressed to the President of the Indigo Commission, by Dr. Duff, to which we purpose again to refer; the document having reached us too late for insertion even in part. It gives a calm and elaborate view of the whole working of the agricultural system in the raising of indigo, of the relations of the zemindars to the ryots, and of the advantages of creating in India an intelligent class to manage agricultural affairs. We are tempted to quote at present the following eloquent passage in defence of the necessity of moral as well as intellectual instruction:—"But intelligence alone will not suffice. High intelligence may be allied with the grossest corruption or moral depravity. And if so, it will only hasten on the progress of decay and final ruin. Not there must be moral worth as well as intelligence—the prudential, domestic, social, and other virtues, as well as the development of the cognitive faculties. We want the love of truth substituted for the love of lies; we want a sense of honour for abject meanness, of self-respect for contented self-degradation, self-reliance for slavish dependence; we want manliness for sneaking servility, straightforwardness for double-dealing, frank outspokenness for Jesuitical concealment and reserve; we want honesty for fraudulence, fair-dealing for trickery and swindling, transparent sincerity for glaring hypocrisy and deceit; we want generosity for covetousness, justice for injury and wrong, benevolence for cruelty—in a word, we want the entire assemblage of the moral virtues or graces, and no education can be really worthy of the name, which does not at least aim at the planting of these ennobling qualities in the minds, hearts, and consciences of the young. And such is the *minimum* of a sound education that is now so clamantly demanded by the dire necessities of the teeming millions of India."

The war in America has been attended with at least one disastrous defeat of the North. A second, in the Western States, is rumoured. There appears still to be little likelihood of any settlement. The probability is, that these disasters will lead the North to take up a more decided position in relation to the question of slavery. This would give to the war a much higher moral aspect than that of a mere struggle for the integrity of the Union, such as it has heretofore assumed.

—From *News of the Churches*.

Revival Intelligence

NORWAY.

It is the unanimous testimony of all parties in the country and acquainted with it, that in Norway there has been a great and wide-spread religious awakening within the last few years. The era of Rationalism in the pulpits is utterly past. Scarcely a single pastor, it is said, can now be found of Rationalistic sentiments. And whatever diversity of theological views or learning may be found amongst them, a large proportion are earnest and devoted ministers. The change is marked, among other things, throughout the people in the towns, by an improved church attendance. Only a few years ago the churches in Christiania were almost empty; now, while they are increased in number, they are crowded Sabbath after Sabbath. In many, if not all the towns, there is, in addition to the regular churches, a separate and independent building or "prayer-house," where worship is conducted both on week-days and Sabbath days out of the canonical hours. It is no uncommon thing to find such a house—in interior arrangements closely resembling a Presbyterian church—filled with an attentive and unwearying audience both on Sabbath evenings and also on week-days, and the ministers of the parish and godly laymen united in conducting the services. The singing of the congregation in these meetings, where the music is entirely vocal, is very lively and devout. The interest in missions has increased, so that now there are no fewer than 400 missionary societies throughout the country. There are four ordained missionaries, besides other labourers, at present among the Zulus in South Africa. The cause of Christ in Norway is at present greatly indebted to some of the Theological Professors in Christiania, whose influence for good amongst their students is acknowledged to be very effective.—*News of the Churches*.

THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE.

There is a wondrous pearl whose price
No angel's tongue could name;
It was not from the Persian Gulf
This lustrous treasure came;

Not from the Coromandel coast,
Nor yet from any sea
That laves the shores of any lands,
Or pearl-famed isles that be.

This gem from depths of Love Divine
The Heavenly Bridegroom brought,
A marriage-token to the Bride
His Cross and Passion bought.

Earth's rarest pearls are dross beside
This "jewel of the just,"
Whose beauty Time can never dim
Nor crumble into dust.

When Heaven shall make the marriage-feast
In dazzling raiment drest,
The Bride will meet the Lord of Life—
His love-gift on her breast.

Its peerless light shall evermore
Her songs of praise inspire,
While "Holy, Holy, Holy Lord,"
Peals from the Heavenly choir!

HARRIET McEWEEN KIMBALL.

POSTAGE.

The Postmaster General has announced that the following Postage Rates shall apply to

- "The Evangelizer" (monthly).
- "The Gospel Message" (do.)
- "The Good News" (semi-monthly.)

A package to the address of one person, sent from the office of publication, may be prepaid, by Postage Stamps, at the rate of *Five Cents* per pound, or fraction of a pound.

When received at destination unpaid, the postage is *One Cent* for each copy, unless paid for at the commuted rate, which is *half a cent* for each copy.

(The reduced or commuted rate for the monthly periodicals, above named, is *three cents* for six months, or six cents for one year; and, for the semi-monthly periodical, in like proportion.)

THE GOOD NEWS.

A Semi-monthly periodical, devoted to the Religious Education of the old and young.—Published on the 1st and 15th of every month, at One Dollar.

It contains:

1. Original and Selected articles, on practical Religion.
2. Revival intelligence and accounts of the various Christian movements for the amelioration of society.
3. A Scripture Lesson for every Sabbath in the year adapted to assist parents and teachers.
4. News of the churches in Canada.
5. A sermon from some living Preacher.

Back numbers can be supplied.

THE EVANGELIZER.

A religious periodical, unsectarian in character and devoted exclusively to the advancement of the Kingdom of God in the world, is published towards the end of every month, at 25 cents per annum, or 50 copies of one issue for a dollar.

The matter of The Evangelizer consists of articles original and selected, and is adapted to arouse sinners, direct inquirers, and quicken God's people.

In order that the Lord's work may be advanced, we offer The Evangelizer for

Gratuitous Circulation.

We are anxious that our paper should circulate among the careless and the infidel, as well as among the religious. Many of these we know, will not subscribe for, or support a paper such as ours, but we wish it to circulate amongst them, notwithstanding. And the way it can be done is this.

Reader, suppose in your locality, school-section, congregation, village or town, there are twenty, thirty, or fifty families, or more, which you could conveniently visit once a month. If you wish to do them good, send to us for as many papers as there are families. If there be fifty families, we will send fifty copies each month. Take them round—hand them kindly to every one of the fifty who will receive them, no matter by what name they are named. When you hand them in, speak a word for Christ. It will be a good opportunity for you. If you are not able to do so, leave the Lord himself to speak through the paper.

In this work all classes of our readers may engage, but especially would we like to enlist a number of females, as we have always found them able and devoted distributors.

The Gospel Message.

Is a small periodical we publish monthly and is substantially a Gospel tract of four pages, or two Gospel tracts of two pages each, or four Gospel tracts of one page each.

It is well adapted for distribution on the railway cars, steamers, at the dismissal of congregations on household visitation, and wherever Gospel tracts can be circulated.

In order that we may supply these as cheaply as possible, the matter of The Message will appear first for some time in The Evangelizer; so that we will be able to send One Hundred and Twenty copies of The Gospel Message by post to any part of Canada for 50 cents.

To those who have the opportunity of scattering, but cannot afford to purchase, as many as they can circulate, we will be glad to supply them gratis as far as the Lord enables us.

For the gratuitous circulation of Evangelizer and Gospel Message.

Donations

Are thankfully received. The scattering of leaflets of truth, is with us a work of faith and labor of love. We spend our time, our talent and our substance, without expecting or desiring any benefit, but such as the Lord sees fit to bestow—so that if He should stir up any of His people to help us with their substance it will be thankfully received and acknowledged.

Colporteurs.

We have now Ten Colporteurs, who devote their time to the distribution of our publications, whom we commend to the Christian kindness of those whom they visit, and to the care and keeping of the Great Head of the Church.

The sphere of usefulness is wide, and the need of Colporteurs great, so that if any young man of piety and activity is desposed to enter on the work, in connection with us they will be kind enough to communicate with us direct.

A Scheme of Sabbath School Lessons for every Sabbath in 1861, is supplied by post for ten ~~sent~~ per dozen,

ROBERT KENNEDY,
Prescott, C.W.

PRINTING

We have been enabled to add considerably to our stock and varieties of type so that we are prepared to publish,

SERMONS, PAMPHLETS, TRACTS, and anything else of a character kindred to our publications.

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