

Practical Papers.

FICTION FOR SABBATH SCHOOLS.



WHAT do we understand by Fiction? We reply all works of the imagination, whether prose or poetry; such as fables, allegories and tales, whether issued in book-form or in the current literature of the day.

The application of the term is proper whether the plot be natural and well-sustained, or unnatural and extravagant. A book is fictitious that recounts even in the most life-like manner any occurrence which has not actually taken place. We propose to attempt an answer to the question,—

SHALL WE FURNISH WORKS OF FICTION

for Sabbath School Libraries? We answer yes, and no. Affirmatively in regard to approved fables and allegories, and perhaps a limited number of books of narrative fiction, which have been duly examined; their literary character and moral teachings being beyond suspicion, but whose title pages shall bear the distinct notification, "This is a work of the imagination." But, No, in relation to all fictitious narratives where the child is not by some means put in possession of the knowledge that the story he is reading is merely fictitious. Many care little if the book be well written, free from pernicious doctrine, extravagant incident, and improper language, whether it be fact or fiction. The result is that the great preponderance of our Sabbath-school books at present are of this class. It would be a difficult thing to find at any stationers, in any Canadian city, a hundred Sabbath-school books which have been published during the past ten years, which do not bear this character. Whether right or wrong, therefore, he who would raise his voice in favor of greatly limiting this popular class of literature must calculate on strong opposition: first from the authors, many of whom have earned great distinction in the world of letters; then from publishing houses and booksellers who are securing large profits from the manufacture and sale of such books. It may be said that this is taking low ground, to assume that good men would persist in doing what is improper from purely financial reasons. But it must not be forgotten that in doubtful matters the money interests weigh largely with many business men, who would not for all the gold in Canada tread upon strictly

forbidden ground. If it be hard to convince a man against his will, it is harder still to do it against his interests.

THE APETITE HAS BEEN CREATED

for, and long supplied with, this kind of mental food, and will not readily cease its clamor for fresh supplies. Again, we have the names of great men who have spoken in favor of light reading to a limited extent. Dr. Adam Clarke says he would have been an arrant coward, had it not been for works of fiction read when he was a child. His list included "Jack the Giant Killer," "Sinbad the Sailor," "The Arabian Nights Entertainment," and several books on magic. But there is no evidence that, had he obtained suitable books of other kinds, the same result might not have been reached; and further, though in themselves there may be redeeming features in many works of fiction, it by no means follows that they are therefore suitable for Sabbath-school libraries. I presume that none of us would go so far as to place on our catalogues the books already named. Mr. Wesley has been cited, because he re-published the "Fool of Quality," and spoke in favor of some articles of fiction. He once recommended the reading of two novels to a young lady of his acquaintance, "*but not more*," said he, "since there is danger to the young of forming a taste for light reading."

That taste exists to-day and needs restraining. One of the strongest articles I have seen on the subject in opposition to the stand we have taken is from a minister in the United States, who said, "I care not whether the book be a story or a fact, so long as the truths taught are sound and the lessons valuable." "I would not," he adds, "take gold in exchange for the benefit my own children have derived from fiction, obtained at the Sabbath-school." And yet the same man in his address goes on to say, "You must not let them read fiction without measure—one of my little girls became so enamoured of it that I directed her to read no more for some length of time, and she then found other works to read." He says,

"THESE BOOKS ARE LIKE CONDIMENTS,

and the grocer is not to be blamed, for selling them; but the parent is wrong to feed his child a whole meal on condiments instead of substantial bread." Surely every man ought to see the fallacy here. Grocers do not sell sauces and pickles wrapped up in packages bearing the label, "infant's food;" if so they certainly would be blamed. This is precisely what I am contending for, that no work of imagination, however excellent, shall go into the school without giving the reader at the outset, in some way, the information that the book is merely a work of the imagination. And as to condiments it is simply true that those children who have never known their names are nothing worse for that ignorance; the best physicians tell us that their use in many instances has injured the digestive organs for life. So of these story books. In many cases the mental powers of the children become so enfeebled by constantly reading them that they never care to exercise their minds in the pursuit of

any valuable branch of study. All the worse because they were given as good reading matter from the Sabbath-school. There are thousands of children in our schools who read for hours together the fascinating stories of "A. L. O. E.," and others, taking no interest whatever in the moral teaching of the books, but merely skimming along with the writer to discover the development of the plot. Such reading does not strengthen the mind, nor inform the judgment, and rarely raises the heart in grateful praise to heaven.

"OUR LORD SPOKE IN PARABLES !

What beautiful stories he invented to teach gospel truth ; therefore we have his example for works of the imagination." But that furnishes no ground of argument in favor of fictitious narratives. What is a parable ? "A fable or allegorical instruction founded on something real or apparent in nature or history, from which a moral is drawn by comparing it with something in which the people are more immediately concerned."—(*Buck.*) Undoubtedly a parable is a work of the imagination, but that faculty is not necessarily employed in manufacturing the incident, but, it may be, merely in applying it to the lesson which it is designed to impart. In narrative fictions an attempt is made to give an imitation of real life, the perusal of which may affect the reader for good or evil according to the manner in which the story is written. It has been assumed that the parables of our Lord are not narratives of fact, but merely a sort of generic representation of certain ideas and practices common to the times in which He lived. But why should we draw this inference ? There is a marked difference in the form in which the parables are presented. Many are introduced by this expression, "Then began He to speak unto them this parable." Others are introduced in a plain historical manner, as, "There was a certain rich man which was clothed in purple and fine linen, &c." Did no rich man ever live, die, and suffer as this man is said to have done ? Doubtless there was more than one such instance, then Christ knew it, and merely spoke of what had actually happened. But

PARABLES ARE NOT STORIES ;

they merely seize on some feature which life discloses that will serve to illustrate the truth presented, and then the case is left. And can this be pleaded in extenuation of the practice of fabricating a life whose greatest merit consists in being life-like, or a good imitation. For just in so far as a work of this kind departs from the natural, it is subject to condemnation by a discriminating public.

Children used to be punished for telling stories. They were not allowed to say to each other, "you have lied," but they might tone it down, by saying, "that is a story." And this indiscriminate writing of story books in such a way as leads the children to suppose that they are following the footsteps of a real person, seems scarcely in accordance with the principles of truth. Still it is not regarded as objectionable by many, because it is so common, if only a respectable story is told, for after all, perhaps some good may be done by the

reading of it. If there were no such object, I suppose every one would say, that it would be wrong to write or say that John Johnston was born in such a street, was a very wicked boy, was sent to prison for three years and died before the close of his period of confinement, if he never did live, act, and suffer as indicated. In fact it would be simply a lie. But

DOES THE END JUSTIFY THE MEANS ?

To me it seems sad that the Jesuitical tendency of the times should have so far influenced the Protestant mind as to accept unquestioned this position. Some years ago I knew a lad who interposed to save a smaller boy from being abused by another, for which he was in turn attacked and severely beaten, though he did his best at self-protection. With his face bleeding and bruised he turned his steps homeward. What was he to do? His father's law was, that none of his boys' must fight under any circumstances. The boy would have told everything, but he knew another punishment awaited him, even worse than he had received. So he resorted to fiction, and told about getting into a waggon to ride home, and falling out behind upon the fresh broken stones of the street, and that after lying some minutes, he got up and walked home. He escaped a thrashing which he did not deserve, but ever after felt that he had told his father a lie. Suppose a young man desirous of making an investment in a certain new company's stock came to you for advice. Would you feel justified in saying, "When I was out in the West a young man of means similar to your own, invested in just such an enterprise and lost over \$4,000, everything he had in the world, and was reduced to beggary," &c. The object, to deter him from rash speculation, would certainly be commendable, but the means would be unworthy. Besides what would be his feelings, if he afterwards found out that this was a mere invention of yours, to persuade him to keep his money. And does it give character to a book simply because it commends pious actions in an imaginary child and makes the good little fellow die happily. I have no sympathy with religious novels, they are in some respects the most dangerous of all fictions. Mr. Morton, of the Plymouth Bethel, Brooklyn, said at Toronto last fall: "The taste for reading the *New York Ledger* and *Waverly* is created by our religious novels in the Sabbath-schools."

THE INFLUENCE OF THESE BOOKS

is injurious in many respects. In nine cases out of ten the heroes of the stories are not life-like, and the incidents are extravagant and delusive. Those who read them find their own lives tame in comparison with what they have read, and are often thereby dissatisfied with life; they usually care to read no other books; indeed it is almost impossible to persuade our scholars to read a good biography, or a work on history or science. The truth is, the mental power seems to be weakened by being frequently excited without corresponding action, for when you have read a touching chapter in a novel, and then remember that it is only a piece of imagination, you will be less easily moved another time to mirth or tears.

In conclusion, admitting that the evils we have enumerated are overdrawn, (which, however, we do not admit), still, is it wise that the Sabbath-schools should furnish these books, at least except under some restriction similar to what we have suggested? Whatever opinion may be entertained in regard to the question now before us, there is scarcely a division of sentiment that the proportion of these books now in the schools exceeds all proper bounds, and many very objectionable books, without being challenged, have been thrown into our schools and are being read to the injury of our children. The investigation of the subject however, brings us up against what has seemed hitherto an impenetrable barrier.

WHAT SHALL WE DO ?

Hardly any other books can be obtained, and if they could the children would not read them. We believe the solution of the problem as given above will meet the case. In this great world of truth there are many more excellent books than any child will ever be able to read, and it seems unfortunate to supply them with what is, in many cases, nothing better than mental trash. In Great Britain, among the Sabbath-school workers of our church, great attention has been turned for some years past to this subject, and many truly excellent works, deeply interesting and instructive, are being published by our book-room. The titles of the books and characteristic notes are published from month to month in the *Sunday-school Magazine*, and we may well follow the example of our fathers and brethren at home on this subject. Let us then select for our schools books which, while well written and pleasantly illustrated, shall also be food for their minds, on which they may become strong,—mentally, morally, and religiously,—and then they will be able to do successful service in the great battle of life.

A. A.

CRITICAL STUDY OF THE BIBLE.—What, then, is the critical study of the Old Testament and the New? It is the scientific, philosophical, manly study of a series of books which, as any Christian man believes, nay, knows, are of the very first importance to the world. And does any Christian man really say that he means to get along with any thing less than the scientific, philosophical, manly study of the books? Does he really mean to take his opinion of them at second hand,—and at second hand, perhaps, from very questionable or very ill-educated teachers? If a man really means that he knows more and better than is taught in the Sermon on the Mount, or that he can come nearer God than the Saviour brings him in the fourteenth chapter of John, that is one thing. That man may, with a certain consistency, excuse himself from careful and adequate study of the Bible; but even in that consistency there is a lamentable confession: "I know very little of the Bible; therefore I do not want to know any more." But not to inquire into the duty or the choice of that man,—for other men, for men who have found Jesus Christ to be their living help, and the Holy Spirit the true leader of life,—is it a natural or consistent thing for them to say, that they are satisfied with a Sunday-school knowledge of our indifferent version of the Bible, and that they will not attempt to extend that knowledge by a systematic or a critical study of it in the original? To say the very least, have such men the right to pronounce, *a priori*, that such study must be functional, formal, and dull?

THE MISSION AND WORK OF THE COMFORTER.

A SERMON.

BY REV. GEORGE COCHRAN.

Preached in the Union Church, Yokohama, Japan, on Sabbath, January 4th, 1874.

“I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever.”—John xiv. 16.



HE Divine law of progress and developement is manifest in the Scriptures. From the first dawn of Revelation, when time was young, we mark a process of unfolding, that brightened and broadened into noon-day. In Christianity we have dispensational fulness and perfection—“A Kingdom that cannot be moved.”—No further Revelation may be looked for, until Christ shall come again, “In His glory, and all the holy angels with Him.” The importance therefore of these words on the Mission of the Spirit, must be apparent to us all. They lift the veil from an event which otherwise were at once an enigma and a sore bereavement,—His departure from the world;—for is He not the living and personal Head of the Church? How then can he be spared? When he says, “It is expedient for you that I go away”—we may well ask,

“My Saviour can it ever be,
That I should gain by losing Thee.”

But as He reveals to us the Mission and work of the Holy Comforter, we begin to understand the meaning of His words. It was required in the former time, that the High Priest, who had offered the victim on the altar, should carry the blood into the “Holiest of all,” and “Sprinkle it upon the mercy seat.” So it was expedient that our Great High Priest, who had offered himself in the outer-court once for all, should go “Into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.” And while *there* “He ever liveth to make intercession.” He has secured that *here*. He shall still “prolong his days,” by the vicarious presence of “*The Lord, the Spirit,*” to whose mission and work, as the ever-present reigning representative of our living but absent Head, I would now direct your minds.

THE MISSION OF THE SPIRIT

Was the burden of *Promise*, even as Christ had been the burden of Prophecy. He is called, “The promise of the Father” and “That Holy Spirit of promise.” And though never absent from the world, but always the “*Lord and giver of Life,*” he was given only partially until Christ was

glorified. We live in the "Dispensation of the Spirit." To us and to our children are fulfilled the promises,—“I will pour water upon him that is thirsty and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring,—I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh.” When John the Baptist went about the land of Judea shaking the hearts of the people with the call to repentance, he directed all eyes to the coming One who would “Baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire.” And the ministry of Jesus was full of the promise of the Spirit. The “Living water,” which He offered to the woman at Jacob’s well, and afterwards to all the people on the “Great day of the feast,” was “The Spirit which they that believe on Him should receive.” It was one of the last themes that hung upon His lips as He stood within the shadow of the cross; and almost the first thing that He resumed upon His resurrection from the dead;—“The same day at evening” He breathed on His disciples and said unto them “Receive ye the Holy Ghost,”—that was the gentle zephyr which ere long waxed into the gust of Pentecost. Among the last words He spoke when about to assume His majesty and reign were these—“Behold I send the promise of my Father among you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high,”—“Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.” The mission of the Spirit was therefore no unexpected gift, and His advent in accordance with the promise was the coronation largess of the King who is now a “Priest upon His throne.”

The mission of the Spirit is in *answer to the prayer of Christ*. “I will pray the Father and He will give you another Comforter.” This prayer begun on earth is still carried on in heaven. He has taught us that the gift of the Holy Spirit comprehends the bestowment of all good—therefore He prays that it may be imparted to us. His words recorded by one Evangelist are—“How much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?”—while another actually reports them—“How much more shall your heavenly Father give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?” The Son prays and the Father, gives not because there is any reluctance,—for the Father loves the souls of men with a pitying tenderness far beyond our thought. What an encouragement for us to pray also, seeing that prayer is thus exalted and consecrated by the example of our Lord. Let us therefore “Draw near with true hearts in full assurance of faith,” seeing our feeble petitions are supported and presented by One whom the Father heareth always.

The mission of the Spirit is *from the Father and the Son*. In the economy of grace all things are of God. There is a Trinity of Persons; but the unity of the Godhead is represented by the Father. There is official subordination in the economy of redemption,—the Son is subject to the Father, and the Spirit is subject to the Father and the Son. Speaking of himself Jesus said, “The word that you hear is not mine but His that sent me,”—of the Spirit He said, “He shall not speak of Himself . . . He shall glorify Me, for He shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you.” The Son was sent by the Father,—and the Spirit is sent by the Father and the Son. “I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter;”—“The Holy Ghost whom

the Father will send in my name, even the Spirit of Truth which proceedeth from the Father." "If I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart I will send Him unto you." When all things were ready,—when the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" was offered—when the "High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus," had passed within the veil,—then the Holy Spirit came to carry on the gracious work, by converting the provisions of Redemption into the joyous experience of Christian life,—the Son glorifies the Father, and the Spirit glorifies the Son, and by the one united and harmonious work of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the Triune God is glorified, and sinners of mankind are saved. As we contemplate the gift of the Father's love,—the grace bestowed by the Lord Jesus,—and the communion of the Holy Ghost, our gratitude, and love and worship are all carried up to the One God,—the infinite and eternal source of every good and perfect gift.

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

He is the *Revealer of Religious Truth*. By His inspiration the Holy Scriptures were written for our learning and hope. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The Saviour said to His disciples,—“He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance,”—“He shall receive of mine and shall shew it unto you.” With Divine authority and power He did all this. He revived in their minds all that Christ had taught them. He did more,—where the Master left off He took up the glorious theme,—completing the lessons and perfecting the scholars. In the Acts, Epistles, and Apocalypse, He carried the canon of Holy Scripture to a fitting close,—and has done His work so well, that nothing can be added, for nothing is left incomplete. He has uncovered to our view the entire firmament of Evangelical Truth, and given a fixed horizon of Spiritual vision to the children of light. The truth which concerns the manifestation of God and the salvation of sinners is, in Christ Jesus full-orbed, and in all respects complete. Therefore, the Holy Spirit has everything at hand, which he needs to show to the souls of men. As "The Spirit of Truth" it is His prerogative, not only to reveal the truth and imprint it upon the recorded page,—but also to secure its world-wide circulation, and its transmission unimpaired through all the ages, until time shall be no more, and by His own omnipotent grace to enthrone it in the hearts of living men with saving power.

His great work is to *reveal and glorify our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*. He is "Another Comforter"—and yet not *another*;—it is as though the *same Lord* abode with us still. He perpetuates the presence of Jesus in the world,—glorifies His Person,—maintains His cause, and carries on His work. As the personal and living link between the absent Lord and the world he has left, His Mission is so essential in the economy of grace that a system of Religion with all the doctrines and institutions of the New Testament, but leaving out the Holy Spirit, would not be Christianity. While Christ was in

the world the Spirit was present in Him. But now that he has withdrawn into the impenetrable mystery of the Father's glory, the Holy Spirit manifests Him unto us in all the plenitude of His Person and work. This is more to us—and better—than Christ's visible residence in the world. It brings Him nearer, and reveals Him unto us more fully, than mere bodily presence could have done. We are aware how possible it is to live with people, and yet not know them truly,—and how characters and actions are often better understood as seen in another light, or viewed from another point of vision. So Christ was manifested more truly even to His personal friends by the Holy Spirit, than when in flesh and blood,—He went in and out amongst them every day. To become adequately known He must depart,—to become really present He must remove. Another must intervene, and rend the veil, and enthrone Him in our very hearts. Then we know Him truly, for He becomes to us the mystery of individual life,—and His own words in their real significance and power are translated into the living facts of a personal experience sublime and glorious—"At that day you shall know that I am in the Father, and I in you, and you in Me." Then, too, His own *parable of the vine* receives its fittest exposition—as leaf, and flower, and fruit, come at once out of the living branches, because they are in Him the living and the true vine.

Let us,—for our comfort,—try to *realize* what is meant by this vicarious presence of the Holy Spirit. Look at those disciples of the Lord! Amidst all storms of disputation, reproach, and peril, that beat upon them, see how safe they feel, as they nestle under the shadow of His wings. And is He not *still* "The same Jesus?" Is He not actuated *now*, by the very motives that then moved His compassionate heart? If, therefore, He were accessible to all of us, and capable of acting upon us by His presence now, as upon the little company of the disciples then,—what comfort it would give us,—what a feeling of security in time of peril,—what vigour and encouragement for every Christian service. How obvious then, the promise of another who shall stand to us in His very stead! Does it not amount to this,—that He shall be to us all that Jesus Himself could be were He visibly present with us now? And since He could not, in His human body be with all His people at the same time, how much better that He is represented by the Omnipresent Spirit, who has authority and power to convey at once, the whole Christ, into every believing heart,—and to "fill us with all the fulness of God."

As the representative of Christ He is our *Comforter* and *Advocate*. This official designation is used in the New Testament only by St. John. In the Gospel it is rendered *Comforter* and applied to the Spirit. In the first Epistle it is used once, where it is said "We have an Advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous." No single word in our language can express all that is meant by the Greek word *Παρακλητος*. As *Comforter*, it describes one who brings us strength and consolation. As *Advocate*, one who stands with us, to plead for us and uphold us in our cause, which but for such assistance would be utterly gainsaid and ruined by the adversary. In this office the Holy Spirit bore down by the lips of the Apostles with such a flood of facts and

arguments, that the Jewish rulers became powerless and panic-stricken, even as the Lord had said,—“I will give you a mouth and wisdom that all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist,”—“It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you.” In these offices of Comforter and Advocate, Jesus was all in all to His disciples,—and by His Holy Spirit He is still the same to all who are saved through His name.

The Holy Ghost is the Spirit of *Conviction*, which answers well to His office of Advocate. “He will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.” The word *Convince*, has been placed in the margin of our Bible as an alternative rendering, and is a better term than *reprove*. In His three-fold power of conviction, the Holy Spirit charged home the sense of *Sin* upon those who rejected the Lord’s anointed; vindicated the *Righteousness* of Jesus, showing that “God hath made that same Jesus, whom they crucified, both Lord and Christ;”—and revealed the *Judgment* passed upon the “Prince of this world,” whose power to prevail over men by force or fraud, in an unbroken course of Empire, is at an end. For all sovereignty is vested in “Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.” Henceforth, progressive amelioration is the law of the world; and Satan, in spite of his strategy and the power of his allies, shall be expelled from his usurped dominion.

This work of *Conviction* is carried on still wherever “The Gospel is preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven,”—there, *conviction* is brought home to the conscience of men,—conviction of their own sin, for which they are verily guilty before God. And wherever this conviction ripens into penitence, and the prayer, “God be merciful to me a sinner,”—there follows the manifestation of *Righteousness*. The propitiatory, substitutional “Righteousness of God,”—which in its gracious offer is “*Unto all*,”—without respect of persons,—and in the benefit of its saving power is “*Upon all them that believe*.” And its acceptance is always accompanied by the glad conviction that the dominion of this world’s prince is broken, for the believer is “delivered from out of the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

The Holy Ghost, as the Spirit of Christ, is the *Life* of believers; for Jesus “came that we might have life, and that we might have it more abundantly.” This life is imparted to us when we experience “the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost;” then “Christ is formed in us” . . . “the hope of glory,” and the “Fountain of Living water springs up *in our heart* unto everlasting life.” Jesus well said, “I will not leave you *orphans*, I will come to you.” Sin has entailed upon us spiritual orphanage. “Having no hope,” and, “without God in the world,” is the real condition of all men out of Christ. But they are no longer orphans, who have received the “Spirit of adoption.” In their deepest heart a Divine voice is sweetly assuring them, “I will be a father unto you, and you shall be my sons and daughters saith the Lord Almighty.” For, “because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying *Abba, Father*.” This is the birth-right of every child of God. “*Because ye are sons*,” for the very reason and in

proof of the fact that ye are sons, God has furnished to you this testimony. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. If a system of religion leaving out the Holy Spirit cannot be called Christianity, so neither can a religionist without the Holy Spirit in his heart be called a Christian; "For if any man has not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His."

The Holy Spirit perpetuates the work of Christ, in the *training of His people for useful service in the world*. We know how the Lord Jesus called and trained His own Apostles,—how He left that training still incomplete,—how the Holy Spirit carried it on unto perfection,—and how wondrously effectual it at length became. They had no reason to complain that the Master was not with them; as they went everywhere preaching the word, the Spirit confirming their testimony with signs following. When the "promise of the Father" was fully come; and "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost,"—then began the mighty witnessing for Jesus, which the preachers of His Gospel still sustain, and are empowered to carry forward in a "bright succession" to the end of time. Gather up the lessons of that auspicious hour and see how much remains, a perpetual heritage to the Church of Christ. Those flaming symbols! How significant! They tell of witnesses invested with the mightiest instrument of propagation,—man's speech with his fellow man. They tell of an inward fire, breaking forth and beginning a conflagration for the smelting and re-moulding of a world of fallen mind. They tell how men baptized with the Holy Ghost are filled with ministerial energy, and prove that the kingdom of God has come not in word only but in power. "*They were all filled with the Holy Ghost,*" is the one central fact of that important hour. No such fulness of the Spirit had ever before been given. In all the past *Messiah* had been prominently before the world *preparing the Redemption*, and having just finished that work, the Holy Spirit came to give it practical effect. The sound from heaven,—the lambent flame,—the miracle of tongues,—were but the ushers and heralds of the Comforter—the sensuous vestments in which He choose to announce His presence among men. The grand feature of the Pentecost,—its spiritual and converting power,—remains the permanent endowment of the church. And this is the gift of the Holy Ghost. Thus Christianity established its own precedent, and brought out its own measure, to be repeated continually until the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord. This is our heritage,—"*The glorious Gospel of the blessed God,*"—"The old, old story, of Jesus and His love,"—that "preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven," and by men, "filled with the Holy Ghost,"—shall "make the wilderness and solitary place glad, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose."

In the early records of the Church we learn how the Holy Spirit raised up an evangelical agency and carried on the work of Christ. He sent Philip to preach Jesus to a nobleman upon his journey. He broke the fetters of ecclesiasticism, and opened unto the Gentiles the door of faith, by showing Peter that "God is no respecter of persons." He arrested the rampant persecutor at the gate of Damascus, converted him into "a minister and a

witness," and made him "a chosen vessel to bear the name of Christ before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." He selected the fields to be cultivated first, and directed the Church in appointing the labourers, saying, "Separate me Barnabas and Paul for the work whereunto I have called them." He fixed the order in which they should enter those fields, "forbidding them to preach the word in Asia," until it had first been carried into Europe and proclaimed in Macedonia. He appointed shepherds to the oversight of flocks as they were gathered, and charged them "to feed the Church of God which He hath purchased with His own blood." And His blessing upon the labours of His servants gave them great success. The grandee of Ethiopia "went on his way rejoicing." On the household of Cornelius "the Holy Spirit fell, as on the Apostles at the beginning." By the ministry of Paul many were "turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." Edified by faithful pastors, the churches "walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost were multiplied."

The Holy Spirit perpetuates the work of Christ by *teaching us to pray*. How beautifully Jesus taught His disciples,—first, by dictating a perfect model of prayer,—and then by revealing the Divine Father and bringing Him so near that they felt He was indeed a Father pitying His human children, and so ready to bless them that prayer to Him rose up spontaneously, and men came to Him for help as naturally as a child comes to a parent. The Holy Spirit continues this instruction as the "Spirit of grace and of supplications." He "also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered,—and He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." He teaches us our need. He shows us the treasured fulness of infinite Divine supplies,—and by His *intercession in us* He draws our hearts out toward God, in earnest and believing prayer,—so earnest that much of it can find expression only in the groan of strong desire, which language has never learned to clothe in words. But it is all intelligible to Him who "searches the heart and knows what is the mind of the Spirit,"—and whose desire to bless us is equalled only by His power. What a warrant for prayer! Jesus said, in view of His departure and the coming of the Spirit, "In that day ye shall ask ME *nothing*. Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the FATHER in MY NAME, He will give it you; ask and receive that your joy may be full." Jesus so revealed the Father, that henceforth we know HIM as the fountain of all good. The Holy Spirit so revealed Jesus, that now we understand the value of His spotless *Name*. And as prompted by the Intercessor within, we ask in the name of our Intercessor above, the Father is well pleased to hear,—the gracious answer comes,—our cup is full, and we "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." In prayer thus offered, God recognizes the work of His own Spirit in the heart of His human child; for the "Spirit who searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God," "maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God,"—and Jesus presents the petitions thus indited before the throne of

grace, securing their acceptance through the merit of His mighty name. Such prayer ceases, in a sense, to be man's prayer at all. It becomes God's own prayer,—inspired by God the Spirit,—presented by God the Son,—and accepted by God the Father; man is all the while, but the intelligent, willing, and happy channel through which the prayer is breathed for his own eternal good.

“ We cannot think a gracious thought,
 We cannot feel a good desire,
 Till He who spake the world from nought
 The power into our hearts inspire ;
 And then we in His Spirit groan,
 And then we give Him back His own.”

This is the prayer in the Holy Ghost. Thank God for prevailing Israels, whose fervent prayers bring down continuous showers of blessing upon the world. They teach us in a way which we can understand that there is a direct communication with the throne of heaven. For God has constituted prayer one of the spiritual forces of the universe. And though men scoff and cavil, the fact remains unchallenged, “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”

The Holy Spirit constitutes the Church the *dwelling place of Christ*. He has come that He may abide with us. But He abides not separately from Christ. His presence in your heart is “Christ in you the hope of glory.” He fulfils the promise of Jesus, “Lo ! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” And also that other promise, “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” He perfects the *unity* of the Church, winding around the hearts of God's dear children the golden bonds of charity,—the greatest grace. He begins with Christ and ends with Christ. He reveals Christ, and re-produces Christ,—for, “We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” And thus the Church Catholic, united in faith and love, “groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord, builded together for an habitation of God, through the Spirit.”

THE HEIGHTS BEYOND.



HERE are doubtless at the present moment thousands of people, sincerely desirous of being truly religious, who regard the privilege of assurance of salvation as an experience almost out of their reach, and a blessing reserved only for a few of God's favoured ones. Such persons, on hearing the testimony of those who have enjoyed the Spirit's witness of adoption, have been known to say, “I would give all the world, if I had it, just to know for certainty that I was forgiven !” There are others who have been favoured with clear scriptural teaching on the subject of justification and its immediate results, and have obtained, through faith, not only pardon for past sin, but a very clear and joyous evidence of

that pardon, who yet look upon another promised experience as something impossible to present attainment, and only to be realised when a whole life's discipline has prepared the soul for its acceptance, and when approaching death is about to place an insurmountable gulf between it and the trials to which it has been subjected while in the body. We speak of course of the experience of perfect holiness. There may be disputes as to the nature of this privilege, and questions as to the mode of its reception and the conditions upon which it is retained; but with the Bible in our hand, it appears to us impossible to avoid seeing there set forth, as attainable in this life, a condition in which the believing soul shall know daily its union with its Saviour, shall be conscious of its full devotedness to Him, shall place its whole strength of affection upon Him, and by the purifying presence of Divine Love, shall be practically delivered from sin. That this is attainable in Christian privilege is attested by many declarations of Divine Truth, and confirmed by the credible testimony of many living witnesses. It would be difficult to measure the loss resulting to Christ's cause from the prevalent notion that such a condition of spiritual life represents the last attainment of religion—a something to be pursued and longed for, but only grasped just as the spirit leaves the body. How greatly would God be glorified were such a standard of experience and living recognised as possible and obligatory now! How would the grace of our Lord Jesus be honoured! How would Scripture truth shine in living embodiments! How earnest and hopeful would the endeavour become to attain the Divine image! And, not least, how covered with shame would those be, who, professing love and loyalty to God, now content themselves in a low state of grace, tolerating sin in their hearts, and excusing themselves for their non-fulfilment of the first and greatest commandment by the plea that to love God with all the heart and soul is not expected of them now!

Let the truth of God be perceived as to the privilege and duty of being entirely holy now, and that the experience is reached by faith in Jesus; and the believer, desirous of glorifying his Father to the utmost, will be prepared to "claim the blessing now." The good Spirit will lead him along the line of self-surrender, to the point of trust; the "exceeding greatness" of Christ's saving power will be seen, and all being yielded to God, there will follow acceptance of what He has promised. At this point the soul enters a purer, "higher life," and unless its "confidence" be "cast away" under the pressure of temptation, or during the absence of joyous feeling, the result is a rest, a power, a freedom from condemnation and doubt, and an ease in doing God's will such as were unknown before. It rests in God; it lives by faith; it loves and obeys, and steadily witnesses that in its case "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin."

It has been said that were the soul to reach in this life an experience such as this, there would be nothing further to look for, nothing to seek or pursue. A great mistake! As if the restoration of a sickly child to health precluded all future growth, and forbade the development of the powers and activities of its manhood! We may just indicate one or two lines along which the fully sanctified soul may progress toward the limitless fulness prepared for

it in heaven. There is the "increase in the knowledge of God," a knowledge of Him who is our Maker and End, which can only be attained as acquaintance with Deity becomes more intimate. "Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he knoweth and understandeth ME." What heights are here!

. . . . "O that I could climb
The wonderful ascent with equal praise!"

Next, there are possibilities of growth in love. As the mind surveys the infinite breadth and glory of the Divine excellencies, the affections enlarge, and the soul is conscious of the inflowing and outflowing of a love which is unspeakable. There are degrees in love up to the point of loving God with all the heart. Some are "cold," others "lukewarm," and others "hot;" but the full enlargement of this holiest affection follows complete deliverance from that evil which it is emphatically said the soul of God hates. We read of the "Rise and progress of religion in the soul!" There is truth in what has been said, that it ought to be the rise and progress of the soul in religion—the all-pervading element in religion being love. "He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." This will prepare the soul for deeper and more intimate fellowship. God is known by the *heart*, and as He is loved increasingly, the communion becomes more constant and familiar. Paradise is restored, in that God walks and talks with man, and man, like Enoch, "walks with God." He sees God face to face, and lives! The Most High tells His secrets to His friends, and to those who dwell under His shadow, there are revealings of His nature and will which are unspeakable. How close this fellowship may become, we may see in Abraham and St. John, in Fenelon and Madame Guyon, in Fletcher, Brainerd, McCheyne, and many others. To this must be added the possibility of progress in active service—of service such as those only can render whose spirits are healed by the blood of Jesus, and energized by the indwelling Spirit of God. The soul may advance in the improvement of natural gifts, in the wisdom to win souls to Christ, in the faith which ventures, the zeal which flames, the courage which attempts great things for God, the power that accomplishes them, and the humility which gives the praise where it is due.

It may be necessary to remark that while the possibility of eminence in "the heights of holiness" is placed before all, it is not for every one to excel in the same grace, and to the same degree. One is fitted alike by constitution and circumstances for the contemplative life, and may possibly enjoy a depth of intimacy unreached by another whose "seal and consecration, and anointing all" are for energetic action and unwearied labours. One may reach high in zeal and power, another may sink low in meekness and humility. The sky is glorious in its height, but there is that which is wonderful in the clear blue depth of the sea.

The ancient saying, that there is no *royal* road to knowledge, may have an application to this. While we are saved by believing simply in Jesus, the

degree of our attainment will be in proportion to the earnestness and diligence of our endeavours. Some of our readers have already passed the Jordan, and exchanged the wilderness for the enjoyments of the "goodly land" of perfect purity. Let them remember that there are not only Pisgahs in the desert, from which the length and breadth of privilege may be seen; but Carmels and Hermous in the good land itself, from which the riches of its glory may be surveyed as never before. The destiny of the human spirit is immortality, and when purified by the blood of its Saviour, it should aspire ever upward—higher, ever higher. And if thought may pass the boundary line which separates this life from that which is eternal, we may obtain a glimpse of an everlasting progression in all that is holy and godlike and joyful, long as God Himself shall live, "or immortality endures."—I. E. PAGE, *in King's Highway.*

THE BEAUTY OF RELIGION.

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.



THINK the most beautiful thing in this world is religion; and I think the most disagreeable thing in this world is religion. Well, ask almost any child whether it likes religious folks, and it will tell you it does not. Ask almost any persons whether they enjoy religious conversation, and four-fifths even of members of the Church, will tell you that they suppose that it is necessary, but it is rather dry talking. They do not relish it very much. If you take the popular impression in regard to religion (and I have great respect for a popular impression which continues from generation to generation) it is about the same impression that men have respecting a physician or an apothecary: that it is a good thing when a fellow cannot help himself, but that the less you have to do with it, ordinarily, the better you are off.

Now, it is worth our while to inquire how it is that this has come to be so. And I do not think we shall need to go far to find out.

If, when I order a beautiful marble bust or statue, I received, in my parlor, a block of unwrought stone, and a man came to work it there, and threw off his chips and dust on the floor, all the time explaining to me how he did it, I should not enjoy statuary. The process would not be very pleasant to have going on in one's house.

If I order a bureau from a cabinet maker, I do not want his shavings, or measures, or fittings and joinings made subjects of instruction in my house, though it may have been the business of the journeyman in the shop to teach the method of making the furniture.

Now, more than half of religious preaching and religious conversation consists in the explanation of the instrumental processes by which we are trying to do something. We talk about *means of grace*. That is it; we talk about the implements, and not about the thing which these implements are to promote. Generally the *means of grace* are conspicuous, but *grace* is not much seen. We talk a great deal about the *doctrines* of religion; but the doctrines of the Christian religion are of no more value than the doctrines of the Brahmins, except in the thing that they do.

There are in Washington a thousand patents, which are extremely curious, but are good for nothing because they do not effect the purpose for which they were intended, or because they do it so expensively and circuitously that it can be better done by other means. The benefit of a doctrine is to be measured by what it will do, as the value of an apple-tree is to be estimated by the quantity of apples that it bears from year to year.

As long as religion consists in the presentation of restraints and regular duties, dividing or methodizing things after a given plan; as long as religion consists in a worship presented in a certain fixed form; as long as we are all the time holding up the processes of religion, and forcing them upon men, so long is religion like any other machinery. It is not interesting, and you cannot make it interesting for any length of time.

It is necessary that there should be all these things; but I say that if you wish to make religion interesting, it is not the loom that you are to show, but the carpet that has been woven in that loom. You must show, not the pigment nor the canvas, but the picture that is wrought on the canvas by the pigment. That is what I mean by religion.

Now, religion, being beautiful, has three elements. One is preparatory. It is turning away from wickedness. It is what is called "repentance." It is the birth in a man of a new tendency. Whereas before he lived selfishly, worldlyly, and for everything that pleased him, there springs up in him a sense of higher manhood, and of allegiance. Under this double sense he strives to draw away from everything that is wrong, and a new and curative tendency is instituted in him.

The second element is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Everybody likes to see a man turn away from things wrong, and this preparatory stage is interesting to people; but still more interesting to them is faith. "I guess not," some of you will say. One says, "I have been hearing about faith as long as I can remember. I have heard a hundred sermons on it. A discussion of faith may be important, but it is not particularly lovely. It does not ordinarily produce a pleasing effect on the mind." That may be true of what you have been accustomed to regard as faith; but faith itself; the living quality; the sense of a Person present who is transcendent over any ordinary companionship; the consciousness of an intelligent Power, of a living Providence; and of the going out of your nature to it, so that you live, not by sight, but by the invisible—by the great supereminent Power that controls all things—not talking about it, but living it, so that men see and feel that you do it—that is beautiful, and it inspires everybody with admiration. Where a person has been under a cloud, and you see that there is something in him which lifts him above the cloud, you cannot help admiring.

Here is a man who lifts himself up through the lower experiences of life. He evidently has something higher than ordinary men have for his support. His vision takes in a larger horizon. He has a broader type of manhood. It is something very serene and beautiful. Everybody that sees it wishes he had it. Men have no prejudice against this. They do not like the doctrine of faith: but the reality of an allegiance to a superior being; the giving of every part of one's self to it; the holding on to a comforting sense of an abiding support—that, everybody admires.

The third element is, that *ye bear much fruit*; that we shall bring forth from our nobler faculties the fruits of grace which shall make us like God.

Now, I have a perfect aversion to perfect folks. I know that imperfection is likely to be at discord with perfection; but I cannot repress it, that I have a dislike to perfect folks—those who are all the time talking perfection, and saying that they are perfect, and showing all the elbow-joints and knuckles of perfection. But now and then I meet a person who is nearly perfect; and

the thing itself, perfection, is beautiful. I love serenity. I love long-suffering. I love gentleness under provocation. I love the nature that is sweet under bitter treatment. I love one who smiles where everybody else frowns. I love one who thinks better of men than people generally do. I love one who "rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth," so that the ideal which is presented to me is full of a higher and nobler life and disposition. I love those who, when I am in trouble, are by me, to succor. I love those who are full of helpfulness. I love all those qualities which are so much insisted upon in the letters of the Apostles, and which were so eminent in the life of Christ himself.

I tell you, there is nothing on earth so beautiful as religion, where you see it in the living form; and there is nothing so little esteemed as religion, where you see it in its machinery, in its organization, in its methods, in its process, in its instruments. It is beautiful in itself; and the more a man is conformed to it, and develops it, the more admirable it seems.

We are now in a skeptical age, and are surrounded by influences that are very strong upon young men and maidens: and the popular literature is, and will be more and more, grounded upon science; and the tendencies of science are not spiritual but material, at present. This is the case the world over. And I should have most serious fear for the future of religion and the Church, if I did not believe that religion is not a set of doctrines, but a style of life and of manhood. I am certain that the beauty of the ideal of that manhood, when it is realized, is something that the world will not see extinguished. There has been so much of it; there are so many tendencies in that direction, now, that the world would mourn if this type of the new life were suddenly put out. Men want the fruit of religion. The grace, the aspiration, the disinterestedness, the hardihood, the courage, the patience, the activity, the enterprise of religion—men want these things.

Mankind have been stirring for religion in every age and in all nations. Now, we have it brought to us in the Lord Jesus Christ, and in his Apostles, and in the long line of noble men who have lived since their time. We have it perfected, rounded out, and exhibited in traits which all the world admires. Whatever befalls churches and systematic theology, religion, as a quality of man's nature is too transcendently precious for the world to suffer it to be lost; and I am not afraid that it will go out.

Men say, "why do you not live so? Why do you not away with all your mediævalism, why do you not away with all your ecclesiasticism, why do you not clear the ground, and just preach manhood?" That is as if you should say to a farmer, "Away with all your tools, and your plowing and harrowing and reaping; away with all your instruments, and give your attention to nothing but harvests." Would a man have any harvests if he did not use tools? You must have preaching to instruct men, and you must have churches and schools to train them in.

The point that I make by these remarks is, that while we are using instruments, we are not to lose sight of the fact that instruments are not religion, but that they are the things which are leading toward it, and by which we seek to educe religion; and that we are not to rely on any machinery. It is not talking about the doctrines of the Church, nor talking about the Church itself, nor talking about Christian duties, that converts the world. We are to convert the world by the power of living godliness in the human heart, if at all. It is not by the power of men, but by the power of God and the wisdom of God, through Jesus Christ, that the world is to be saved.

THE HIGHER CHRISTIAN LIFE.



IN this article I shall consider what the Higher Life is, and how it is to be attained.

As to what it is—it is simply letting the Lord carry our burdens and manage our affairs, instead of trying to do it ourselves.

Most Christians are like a man who was toiling along the road bending under a heavy burden, when a wagon overtook him, and the driver kindly offered to help him on his journey. He joyfully accepted the offer; but when seated continued to bend beneath his burden, which he still kept on his shoulder. "Why do you not lay down your burden?" asked the kind-hearted driver. "Oh!" replied the man, "I feel that it is almost too much to ask you to carry me, and I could not think of letting you carry my burden too." And so Christians, who have given themselves into the care and keeping of the Lord Jesus, still continue to bend beneath the weight of their burden, and often go weary and heavy laden through the whole length of their journey.

When I speak of burdens, I mean *everything that troubles us*, whether temporal or spiritual. I mean our houses, our servants, our business, our children and all our outward affairs. And I mean also our peculiar temperaments, our especial weaknesses, our cold and dead frames and feelings, and all our inward affairs. We are prone to commit the keeping of our souls to the Lord, because we know, without a shadow of doubt, that we cannot keep them ourselves; but all these other things we take into our own keeping, and try to carry on our own shoulders, with the, perhaps, unconfessed feeling that it is a great deal to ask the Lord to carry us, and that we cannot think of asking him to carry our burdens too.

I knew a lady who had a very heavy burden. It took away her sleep and her appetite, and there was a danger of her health breaking down under it. One day, when it seemed especially heavy, she noticed lying on the table near her a little tract called "Hannah's Faith." Attracted by the name, she picked it up and began to read it, little knowing, however, that it was to create a revolution in her whole experience. The story was of a poor woman who had been carried triumphantly through a life of unusual sorrow. She was giving the history of her life to a kind visitor on one occasion; and at the close the visitor said, feelingly,

"O Hannah! I do not see how you could bear so much sorrow."

"I did not bear it," was the quick reply: "*the Lord bore it for me.*"

"Yes," said the visitor, "that is the right way. We must take our troubles to the Lord."

"Yes," replied Hannah, "but we must do more than that: *we must leave them there.* Most people," she continued, "take their burdens to Him; but they bring them away with them again, and are just as worried and unhappy as ever. But I take mine and I leave them with him, and come away and forget them. And if they come back, I take them again; and I do this over and over, until at last I just forget I have any troubles, and am at perfect rest."

My friend was very much struck with this plan, and resolved to try it. The circumstances of her life she could not alter; but she took them to the Lord, and handed them over into his management, and then she believed that he took it, and she left all the responsibility and the worry and anxiety with him. As often as they returned she took them back; and the result was that, although the circumstances remained unchanged, her soul was kept in perfect peace in the midst of them. She felt that she had found out a blessed secret;

and from that time she never again tried to carry one of her own burdens, nor to manage any thing for herself.

And the secret she found so effectual in her outward affairs she found to be still more effectual in her inward ones, which were in truth even more utterly unmanageable. She abandoned her whole self to the Lord, with all that she was and that she had; and, believing that he took that which she had committed to him, she ceased forever to fret and worry, and her life became all sunshine in the gladness of belonging to him. And this was, "the Higher Christian Life!" It was a very simple secret she found out: only this, that it was possible to obey God's commandment contained in those words, "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God," and that, in obeying it, the result would inevitably be, according to the promise, that the "peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep her heart and mind through Christ Jesus."

There are many other things to be said about the Higher Christian Life, many details as to what the Lord Jesus does for those who thus abandon themselves to him. But the gist of the whole matter is here stated, and the soul that has got hold of this secret has found the key that will unlock the whole treasure-house of God.

And now I do trust I have made you hungry for this blessed life. Would you not like to get rid of your burdens? Do you not long to hand over the management of your unmanageable self into the hands of one who is able to manage you? Are you not tired and weary? and does not the rest I speak of look sweet to you?

Will you not, then, ask the Lord, with me, to make the way of entering into rest so plain that not can fail to see it?

And meanwhile, will you not try, day and night, in all things to obey this blessed command of our Lord, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid?"—*Pathway of Power.*

MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR THEE.



ALL unseen the Master walketh
 By the toiling servant's side;
 Comfortable words He speaketh,
 While His hands uphold and guide.

Grief, nor pain, nor any sorrow
 Rends the heart, to Him unknown;
 He to-day, and He to-morrow,
 Grace sufficient gives His own.

Holy strivings nerve and strengthen,
 Long endurance wins the crown;
 When the evening shadows lengthen,
 Thou shalt lay thy burden down.

Miscellany.

TRIED GOLD.

—
BY LILLIE E. BARR.
—

I.

Get the spindle and distaff ready,
God will send the flax ;
So makes the bee, from Summer flowers,
Honeycomb and wax.
Work the six days, pray all seven,
Trust the rest to the grace of heaven.

II.

Cast thy bread upon the waters,
Ask not gain or praise,
Thou shalt eat it fresh and sweet,
After many days.
Work the six days, pray all seven,
Trust the rest to the grace of heaven.

III.

Winds may blow, but the tree God
planteth
Taket h deeper root ;
Winds that shake it cannot break it.
It shall bear good fruit.
Work the six days, pray all seven,
Leave the rest to the grace of heaven.

IV.

Never wish for the tarnished wages,
Fraud and lying pay ;
Unto every evil-doer
Comes the evil day.
Work the six days, pray all seven,
Trust the rest to the grace of heaven.

V.

Go to the "well of living waters"
If thy spirit faints ;
Better it is to do with God
Than with all his saints.

Work the six days, pray all seven,
Trust the rest to the grace of heaven.

VI.

He doeth well who doeth his best,
He doeth well who strives ;
Noblest efforts may sometimes fail,—
Never noble lives.
Work the six days, pray all seven,
Trust the rest to the grace of heaven.

"A BRAND PLUCKED OUT OF THE FIRE."

—
[We have received the following narrative from our venerable friend, John Mathewson, Esq., of Montreal, who, at the ripe age of more than fourscore years, still lingers on this side the river.—EDITOR, E. C.]

WHEN I resided in Londonderry, in the year 1820, an interesting circumstance occurred. A man named Atkinson was, with several others, concerned in a number of robberies. At length they committed a robbery and murder, about twenty miles from Londonderry. Three of the parties were arrested, and placed in jail, but soon after broke jail and escaped. In a short time two of them were captured, tried and executed.—Atkinson was still at large, and being a very powerful man, and known to be thoroughly armed, he was a terror to everybody. However, he was at last taken, when asleep, and brought back to Londonderry jail. After a short time he was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to be hung within 48 hours. In the course of the trial it appeared that Atkinson himself had been averse to the murder. One of the witnesses, the widow of the murdered man, testified

that she believed she would have lost her life, but for Atkinson; when her husband had been shot by one of the gang, and he was about to fire at her also, Atkinson prevented him, saying that he would shoot the first man who raised his hand to strike or fire; that he came to rob, but not to murder.

When I heard these statements, I thought there must still be something of remorse or feeling left in the man, and I felt that I must go to the jail and see him, and talk with him about his soul. I strove to get rid of the conviction by saying there were a number of ministers in the city, and that it was their place, not mine, to go and see the man. Still the impression upon my mind remain'd. I retired to my room to seek Divine direction and the conviction became deeper that I must go. Accordingly, I went to the jail, and told the keeper for what purpose I had come. He said, in reply, he was sorry he could not admit me; that the Sheriff had been there, and he had given strict orders to admit no one without a pass from himself, as the prisoner had broken jail before, and might attempt it again. I immediately hurried off to the Sheriff's office, and told him for what purpose I had come. He asked me if I knew the prisoner. I said no; I had never seen him. He said he thought there was little use in seeing him, he was such a bad man. I said, bad as he was there was mercy for him, if he humbled himself before God, and sought pardon through Christ; and that if he (the Sheriff) prevented a minister or kind friends from seeing the prisoner and speaking with him about his soul, he would have to give account therefor to God. He said he would think of it, and immediately entered his carriage and drove away.

Between eight and nine o'clock, the Sheriff sent his servant with a letter saying, if I wished I might take a friend with me and go to see Atkinson, but that I must remain locked up in the cell all night. I thought this was rather hard, and that probably the Sheriff had several objects in view:—If I went, his prisoner would be safe; it would be a good way of testing the sincerity of "those Methodists;" if I declined the condition it would be an easy way to get rid of me.

On my way to the jail I called upon the Methodist Minister, the Rev. Mr. Irwin, and told him the whole affair. He immediately said he would not let me go alone, so we went together. The jailer was very courteous, prepared seats and lights, and introduced us to the condemned man's cell. After telling the prisoner who we were and for what purpose we had come, the jailer bid us a kind good night, and retired, and we found ourselves alone with the doomed man. I shall never forget his wild, haggard looks. He was heavily ironed, and was just about lying down on his miserable bed. I have no doubt he would gladly have excused us; but we felt it was now or never. We read suitable portions of Scripture, conversed, and prayed with him several times during the night. He said but little, except that he had intended to commit suicide that night by means of poison which had been given him before he left the Court-house. We pointed out the great sinfulness of such an act, and he at last gave up the poison.

In the morning Mr. Irwin left, but I remained for some time longer. I told Atkinson it was well-known he had been connected with several robberies of late, and that if he had any of the stolen property in his possession, or knew where it was, it was now his duty to confess it, so that it might be returned to the rightful owners. I also told him that he need not expect pardon from God, so long as he had such property in his possession; and that the interest I took in this matter could be prompted only by a desire for his salvation. I saw these remarks affected him considerably, and I left him to consider them.

About 11 o'clock a messenger told me that Atkinson wished to see me. As soon as I entered his cell he told me that he knew where a quantity of stolen property was concealed, and that he now wished to have it restored to its proper owners. I then took down, at his dictation, a list of 15 or 16 horses and cows, and some other property, which he, with others, had stolen. He gave me a full description of the animals, the names of their owners and the places where the property was concealed. Atkinson and his gang were connected with another gang near Belfast. Each gang would

rob in its own part of the country, and then exchange the booty with one another, to prevent detection.

When Atkinson had made this confession, his previous hardness disappeared. He was completely broken down, and wept bitterly, I prayed with him again, and was about leaving when he requested me to come and stay with him that night, as it would be his last. I accordingly returned in the evening, in company with the Rev. Mr. Irwin and two of our class-leaders. Atkinson was in deep distress of mind, crying to God for mercy. About 12 o'clock that night God answered prayer, and set the guilty soul at liberty. The transformation was glorious. The condemned man started to his feet, and praised God so loudly that the jailer heard him, and fearing something was wrong, came down and opened the cell. The jail was built in the circular form, the cells opening on a large hall in the centre. The jailer now opened the outer doors of these cells, so that, through the inner grating, the prisoners could see and hear all that was going on. The guards were then brought in, also the families of the jailer and turnkeys, and Mr. Irwin preached a most powerful sermon. We continued continued in praise and prayer till the

In the morning the Rev. William Finlay, (father of Mr. Samuel Finlay, now of Montreal), who was stationed on an adjoining circuit, arrived in town, and to him I related the whole affair. He kindly consented to stay with Atkinson, as the rest of us were worn out. Mr. Finlay told me afterwards that the parting scene between Atkinson and his wife was unspeakably affecting. He exhorted her to forsake her sins and seek pardon from God, telling her, at the same time, what God had done for his soul. The Sheriff was present all the time, and seemed astonished. He said—"How can you be so sure of what God has done?" Atkinson replied—"Were not my feet chained of late, so that I could not walk?" "Yes," said the Sheriff. "Well," continued the prisoner, you ordered the chains to be taken off, and now I can walk; and I am just as sure that God for Christ's sake, has taken off the chains of sin from my soul and set me at liberty." On the scaffold he exhorted the people to keep from bad company and gambling, declaring that these had been his destruction.

The next day I made out a list of the stolen property, from whom taken, and where to be found, which I took to the Mayor, informing him of the whole affair. A day or two after, I called again, to see what he had done. He said he had called a meeting of the magistrates for consultation, and that they had come to the conclusion not to do anything, as it would only cause trouble and disturbance in the country, and perhaps not result in the recovery of the property after all. Getting no satisfaction from the Mayor, I concluded to try what I could do myself. I accordingly wrote to a man who lived about nine miles from Londonderry, from whom Atkinson had stolen a horse, saying I wished to see him. When he came, I detailed the matter, telling him the horse could be found at a place about 60 miles distant and that I would give him a letter to a gentleman in that neighborhood with whom I was acquainted. He went accordingly, and delivered my letter. The gentleman went with him to the place, and there they found the horse plowing. They spoke to the man, who said he had bought the horse from a neighbor, who, in turn had bought it from the man to whom it had been sent by Atkinson. He gladly gave up the horse to save further trouble.

The affair soon got abroad, and created no small stir in the city. When the owner of the horse came to thank me for the aid I had given, I said to him,—“You have now seen what the grace of God did for poor Atkinson; and the proof of his sincerity is seen in his anxiety that all the stolen property should be restored to its rightful owners. Would you have any objection to Mr. Irwin going out and preaching to your neighbors?” He replied, “Not the least, provided you will come with him.” This I consented to do, and an appointment was arranged for the following Sunday afternoon. There were no Methodists within 9 miles of that neighborhood at the time, and we expected only a few of the neighbors to preach to; but before we arrived the affair had been circulated through the country, and the people turned out in such numbers that no house could hold them, so Mr. Irwin had to preach in a field. The people seemed deeply impressed, and invited him to preach the next Sunday, which he did. This led to regular preaching in the

neighborhood, and after an absence of 20 years from that part of the country, I was glad to learn that the preaching was still continued, and that there was a flourishing class of 20 members.

The practical lessons of this simple little narrative are too obvious to need special application. I will therefore leave that part to the reader; and will merely say to those who may be curious about the matter, that I succeeded in getting nearly all the stolen property returned to its rightful owners.

JOHN MATHEWSON.

Montreal, 1874.

THE MASSACRE OF CHURCH MUSIC.

THERE has been an effort made for the last twenty years to kill congregational singing. The attempt has been tolerably successful; but it seems to me that some rules might be given by which the work could be done more quickly and completely. What is the use of having it lingering on in this uncertain way? Why not put it out of its misery? If you are going to kill a snake, kill it thoroughly, and do not let it keep on wagging its tail till sundown. Congregational singing is a nuisance, anyhow, to many of the people. It interferes with their comfort. It offends their taste. It disposes their noses to flexibility in the upward direction. It is too democratic in its tendency. Down with congregational singing and let us have no more of it.

The first rule for killing it is to have only *such tunes as the people cannot sing*.

In some churches it is the custom for choirs at each service to sing *one* tune which the people know. It is very generous of the choir to do that. The people ought to be very thankful for the donation. They do not deserve it. They are all "miserable offenders," (I heard them say so), and, if permitted *once* in a service to sing, ought to think themselves highly favored. But I oppose this singing of even the *one* tune that the people understand. It spoils them. It gets them hankering after more. Total abstinence is the only safety; for, if you allow them to imbibe at all, they will after a while get in the habit of drinking too much of it, and the first thing you know they will

be going around drunk on sacred psalmody. Besides that, if you let them sing one tune at a service, they will be putting their oar into the other tunes and bothering the choir. There is nothing more annoying to the choir than, at some moment when they have drawn out a note to exquisite fineness, thin as a split hair, to have some blundering elder to come in with a "Praise ye the Lord!" Total abstinence, I say! Let all the churches take the pledge even against the milder musical beverages; for they who tamper with champagne cider soon get to Hock and old Burgundy.

Now, if *all* the tunes are new, there will be no temptation to the people. They will not keep humming along, hoping that they will find some bars down where they can break into the clover pasture. They will take the tune as an inextricable conundrum, and give it up. Besides that, Pisgah, Ortonville, and Brattle-street are old fashioned. They did very well in their day. Our fathers were simple-minded people, and the tunes fitted them. But our fathers are gone, and they ought to have taken their baggage with them. It is a nuisance to have those old tunes floating around the church, and some time, just as we have got the music as fine as an opera, to have a revival of religion come, and some new-born soul break out in "Rock of Ages Cleft for Me!" till the organist stamps the pedal with indignation, and the leader of the tune gets red in the face and swears. Certainly anything that makes a man swear is wrong—*ergo*, congregational singing is wrong. *Quod erat demonstrandum*; which, being translated, means *Plain as the nose on a man's face*. What right have people to sing who know nothing about rhythmic, melodies, dynamics? The old tunes ought to be ashamed of themselves when compared with our modern beauties. Let Dundee, and Portuguese Hymn, and Silver Street hide their heads beside what we heard not long ago in a church—just where I shall not tell. The minister read the hymn beautifully. The organ began, and the choir sang, as near as I could understand, as follows:

Oo—aw—gee—bah
Ah—me—la—he
O—pah—sah—dah
Wo—haw—gee-e-e-e.

My wife, seated beside me, did not

like the music. But I said: "What beautiful sentiment! My dear, it is a pastoral. You might have known that from '*Wo-haw-gee!*' You have had your taste ruined by attending the Brooklyn Tabernacle." The choir repeated the last line of the hymn four times. Then the prima donna leaped on to the first line, and slipped, and fell on to the second, and that broke and let her through into the third. The other voices came in to pick her up, and got into a grand wrangle, and the bass and the soprano had it for about ten seconds; but the soprano beat (women always do), and the bass rolled down into the cellar, and the soprano went up into the garret, but the latter kept on squalling as though the bass, in leaving her, had wickedly torn out all her back hair. I felt anxious about the soprano, and looked back to see if she had fainted; but found her reclining in the arms of a young man who looked strong enough to take care of her.

Now I admit that we cannot all have such things in our churches. It costs like sixty. In the Church of the Holy Bankak it costs one hundred dollars to have sung that communion piece:

"Ye wretched, hungry, starving poor!"

But let us come as near to it as we can. The tune "Pisgah" has been standing long enough on "Jordan's stormy banks." Let it pass over and get out of the wet weather. Good-bye "Antioch," "Harwell," and "Boylston." Good bye till we meet in glory.

But, if the prescription of new tunes does not end congregational singing, I have another suggestion. Get an irreligious choir, and put them in a high balcony back of the congregation. I know choirs who are made up chiefly of religious people; or those, at least, respectful for sacred things. That will never do, if you want to kill the music. The theatrical troupe are not busy elsewhere on Sabbath, and you can get them at half price to sing the praises of the Lord. Meet them in the green room at the close of the "Black Crook" and secure them. They will come to church with opera-glasses, which will bring the minister so near to them they can, from their high perch, look clear down his throat and see his sermon before it is delivered. They will make excellent

poetry on Deacon GOODSOL as he carries around the missionary box. They will write dear little notes to Gonzaldo, asking him how his cold is and how he likes gum-drops. Without interfering with the worship below, they can discuss the comparative fashionableness of "The Basque" and "The Polonaise," the one lady vowing she thinks the first style is "horrid," and the other saying she would rather die than be seen in the latter—all this while the chorister is gone out during sermon to refresh himself with a mint-julep, hastening back in time to sing the last hymn. How much like heaven it will be when, at the close of a solemn service, we are favored with snatches from Verdi's "Trovatore," Meyerbeer's "Huguenots," and Bellini's "Sonnambula," from such artistes as:

Prima Donna Soprano,
MADemoiselle SQUINTELLÉ,
from Grand Opera House, Paris.

SIGNOR BOMBASTANI,
Basso Buffo,
from Royal Italian Opera.

CARL SCHNEIDERINE,
First Baritone,
of His Majesty's Theatre, Berlin.

If after three months of taking these two prescriptions the congregational singing is not thoroughly dead, send me a letter directed to my name, with the title of O. F. M. (Old Fogy in Music), and I will, on the receipt thereof, write another prescription, which I am sure will kill it dead as a door-nail, and that is the dearest thing in all history.

—[*Talmage in The Independent.*

WORDS FOR PREACHERS.

WHEN I began to preach of these things (death, judgment, etc.) long ago. I confess the matters seemed to me so terrible, that I was afraid that people would have run out of their wits with fear; but a little experience showed me, that many are like a dog that is bred up in a forge or furnace, that being used to it, can sleep, though the hammers are beating, and the fire and hot iron flaming about him, when another that had never seen it, would be amazed at the sight.—*Baxter, 1615-1691.*

My best presentations of the Gospel to you are so incomplete! Sometimes, when I am alone, I have such sweet and rapturous visions of the love of God and the truths of His Word, that I think, if I could speak to you then, I should move your hearts. I am like a child, who, walking forth some sunny summer's morning, sees grass and flower all shining with drops of dew.

"Oh!" he cries, "I'll carry these beautiful things to my mother."

And, eagerly plucking them, the dew drops into his little palm, and all the charm is gone. There is but grass in his hand, and no longer pearls.—*Beecher.*

THEIR DISCOURAGEMENTS.

THIS is the killing pain of all our pains, that all we do is rejected. Ministers would not be gray-headed so soon, nor die so fast for all their labor, if it were but successful; but this cuts to the heart, and makes us bleed in secret, that though we do much it comes to nothing. I am placed in an hospital, where there are so many sore diseased creatures, that it would pity any one's heart to look on them, and yet when I came to dress them they all curse me in their heart; and one hides his wounds from me, and another says and swears he is as well as I, in as good a condition as his minister; and yet looks as pale as death, as black in the mouth and eyes as if he were in hell already.—*Lockier.*

CAUSELESS depression is not to be reasoned with, nor can David's harp charm it away, by sweet discoursings. As well fight with the mist as with this shapeless, undefinable, yet all-beclouding hopelessness. If those who laugh at such melancholy did but feel the grief of it, for one hour, their laughter would be sobered into compassion. Resolution might, perhaps, shake it off, but where are we to find the resolution, when the whole man is unstrung?—*Spurgeon.*

THERE are three kinds of men in the world—the Wills, the Wont's, and the Cant's. The first effect everything; the others oppose everything. "I will" builds our railroads and steamboats; "I won't" don't believe in experiments and nonsense; while "I can't" grows weeds for wheat, and commonly ends his days in the slow digestion of bankruptcy.

A QUESTION WITH ONLY ONE ANSWER.

A YOUNG man from the provinces, who was sent to Paris to finish his education, had the misfortune of getting into bad company. He went so far as to wish and to say, There is no God: God was only a word. After staying several years in the capital, the young man returned to his family. One day he was invited to a respectable house, where there was a numerous company. While all were entertaining themselves with news, pleasures, and business, two girls, aged respectively twelve and thirteen, were seated in a bay window, reading together. The young man approached them, and asked:—

"What beautiful romance are you reading so attentively, young ladies?"

"We are reading no romance, sir; we are reading the history of God's chosen people."

"You believe then that there is a God?"

Astonished at such a question, the girls looked at each other, the blood mounting to their cheeks.

"And you, sir—do you not believe it?"

"Once I believed it; but after living in Paris, and studying philosophy, mathematics, and politics, I am convinced that God is an empty word."

"I, sir, was never in Paris; I have never studied philosophy or mathematics, or all those beautiful things which you know; I only know my catechism. But since you are so learned, and say there is no God, you can easily tell me whence the egg comes?"

"A funny question, truly; the egg comes from the hen."

"And now, sir, whence comes the hen?"

"You know that as well as I do, miss; the hen comes from the egg."

"Which of them existed first, the egg or the hen?"

"I really do not know what you intend with this question, and with your hen; but yet that which existed first was the hen."

"There is a hen, then, which did not come from an egg?"

"Beg your pardon, miss; I did not take notice that the egg existed first."

"There is, then, an egg which did not come from a hen?"

"O! if you—beg pardon—that is—you see—"

"I see, sir, that you do not know whether the egg existed before the hen, or the hen before the egg."

"Well, then, I say the hen."

"Very well; there is, then, a hen which did not come from an egg. Tell me, now, who made this first hen, from which all other eggs and hens come?"

"With your hens and your eggs, it seems to me you take me for a poultry-dealer."

"By no means, sir; I only asked you to tell me whence the mother of all hens and eggs come."

"But for what object?"

"Well, since you do not know, you will permit me to tell you. He who created the first hen, or, as you would rather have it, the first egg, is the same who created the world; and this being we call God. You, who cannot explain the existence of a hen or an egg without God, still wish to maintain to be able to explain the existence of this world without God."

The young philosopher was silent, and quietly took his hat, and full of shame departed.—*Translated from the French.*

LOVEFEAST.



AFTER long delay, I have at length overcome my reluctance to write an account of the way by which the Lord led me into the enjoyment of full salvation. In the course of my ministrations I have testified to this grace before thousands of the Lord's people, and if my *written* testimony can bring glory to Christ, or benefit to His saints, I have no right to withhold it. Indeed, it is one of the conditions on which I hold the blessing, that I shall make it known to others, as by this means "the communication" of our "faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in 'us' by Christ Jesus."

My conversion was clear. No one, perhaps, had ever less cause to doubt its reality. I could go to the spot where I received "the sense of sin forgiven"

through faith in Jesus Christ. With a heart-felt consciousness of His peace, I testified before many to whom I had access, and soon found the way opening for the public proclamation of His love. Forward I went, preaching "the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins," and in a few years I was fully employed in calling sinners to repentance. My testimony to the pardon of sin through faith in Jesus Christ was not altogether in vain, for in some of my services I had the joy of seeing sinners brought to God.

But through all the earlier years of my Christian life and ministry I was conscious there was a higher degree of salvation for me if I could only attain to it. Many times I was deeply impressed with the need of having my heart purified from sin, and I was moved to seek this blessing. I knew there were some living witnesses that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin," but scarcely any of my acquaintance professed it. Although I was convinced it was the privilege of all, I confess I looked upon those who enjoyed this blessing as very specially favoured. Many times I was stirred to pray for full salvation from the power and the inbeing of sin. I believed in such a salvation, but I did not believe for it. Once in particular, I remember, after reading one of Mrs. Palmer's books upon the subject, I earnestly prayed that I might obtain it. As I walked along the road to a country appointment, my desire became intense, and I prayed that God would then impart it to me. I do not think I ever felt it more necessary to my Christian enjoyment and ministerial success than I did at that moment. But with all this desire and prayer, I failed to obtain it. I seemed to be seeking another salvation, rather than a higher degree of the salvation I then possessed. This higher degree could only be obtained by faith, but I had no one to simplify to me the way of believing. Looking back upon my struggles to obtain this blessing, I see how zealously I tried to obtain it by the works of the law. Early in my Christian course I drew up a covenant and signed it, binding myself to conditions I found it impossible to fulfil. I have tried to live by strict rules, thinking that if I could live as some whose "lives" I had read, I might find it. My strictness of life so affected my accus-

toned cheerfulness, that one who observed it, said, If that was what entire sanctification would do for me, it was to be hoped I should never attain it. I need scarcely say that I looked too much to the help of man. I read various authors. Any book on the subject, new or old, I read with eagerness. One book in particular I expected great things from, but when the last page was read I was still without the blessing. Discouraged by my failure, at length I yielded to the temptation that it was too high for me to attain, and for two or three years I was content with past experience. I was sometimes reproved by my conscience for so doing, especially when speaking to others about faith in Christ for the pardon of their sins. At length, on Saturday, the 27th January, 1866, I was again much stirred in spirit, and was greatly encouraged by reading an article on "Purity of Heart" in a periodical called "The Messenger of Life." For the benefit of others, I will give the substance of it. The writer showed that the means to be employed for its reception are Prayer and Faith. The preparation required was (1) a conviction that you need it, and (2) a desire to obtain it. Both these I found myself to possess. Reference was then made to the words of Jesus, where He says, "What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." (Mark xi. 24.) The desire is to be put into prayer; and, while in the act of praying, you are to believe you do receive the blessing you pray for, and you shall have it. The faith which sanctifies was then described as:—

1. A *conviction* in the mind and heart that the blessing desired is *attainable*, as no one will strive to obtain that which he believes cannot be possessed.

2. An *assurance* that the blessing is *promised* in the word of God, instancing Ezek. xxxi. 25-27.

3. A *conviction* that the person promising the blessing is also *able* to perform it.—Eph. iii. 20.

4. That He who is *able* is also *willing*.—1 Thess. v. 24.

5. Not only faith in God's promise, ability, and willingness to bestow it; but that He is able and willing to do it now. Th: Lord says *now* is the accepted time, *now*'s the day of salvation. Satan says, some other time; you are not fit;

you are not prepared; you are not ready for it. Beware, lest he lead you to seek it by works instead of by FAITH. If it is to be by faith, as the Scriptures distinctly teach, then you, and all things, are now ready. Then plunge into the Fountain open for sin and uncleanness. His blood avails now. Plunge now, for it cleanses now.

6. If you have not obtained the blessing you ask, said the writer, the next step is to believe that the Lord DOES it. That is, while you are in the act of praying, say, Lord, I believe I do receive. Thou dost sprinkle me with clean water and make me clean; from all my filthiness and from all my idols, Thou dost cleanse me this moment; the blood of Jesus Christ Thy Son cleanseth me now from all sin. I claim the blessing. I am now washed. I am now sanctified wholly, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. Should there still be any doubt left in your mind, you must—

7. Steadfastly believe that you receive the blessing you pray for. Should you ask, But am I to believe that I receive before I feel? Certainly. You are not saved by feeling, but by faith. But upon what authority am I to believe? I answer, not on the authority of your own feelings, for how can you feel before you receive? How can you feel you drink water before you drink it? Well, then, I want to receive. But how can you receive before you believe? It is, believe first, receive next, and feel last. Believe; receive; feel. Jesus says, "Believe that ye receive, and ye shall have." Suppose I had a friend in whom I had the greatest confidence, possessing intelligence, piety, and wealth, and he should show me a £5 Bank of England note, and say, "If you will believe my word, and not doubt in your heart, I will put this bank note into your coat pocket behind you. Now, are you believing, because I am putting it in?" Yes, I am believing that I receive it. "There," says he, "I have put it in your coat pocket; do you believe me?" Yes, I believe it. I have now a £5 Bank of England note in my coat pocket. Suppose some one were to say, "How do you know it—you can't feel it?" You would say, "No, I cannot feel it, but I know it is there." "But how do you know?" "Because my friend says so,

and I honour his word, and can trust in his veracity, and don't doubt for a moment that I have it."

If you would trust a friend so, said the writer, would you doubt for a moment the words of the Lord Jesus? Is He not the Way, the Truth, and the Life? Does He not say just now, "Believe ye receive, and ye shall have?" Then at once say, "Lord, I believe I now receive, and I have it." Thus you are sanctified by faith, which is in Christ. Hold fast, your heart shall be impressed with the Holy Ghost's indubitable seal.

S. The next point was to confess it. Say at once, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth me from all sin." Tell your friends. Tell it in your class. Tell them all that you do now "reckon yourself dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ" your "Lord."

This believing I *did* receive when I prayed was something new to me. It was as a new revelation. All day it was revolving in my mind, and before retiring for the night, I determined to try what this believing would do for me. On my knees, after telling the Lord what I desired, and that I was willing to receive it, and if I received it I would confess it on all proper occasions, I said, "Lord, I believe Thou dost this moment cleanse my soul from all sin. Thou dost this moment save me." And while my lips gave expression to the words, although I had nothing but the promise and faithfulness of God to rely upon, my heart did firmly believe that God fulfilled His purpose in me, and that the blood of Jesus cleansed me from all sin. Almost as soon as I had spoken the words, I felt that it was even as I desired, that according to my faith so it was done unto me. I believed that I received the blessing, and I had it.

Immediately I began to praise the Lord, and to confess what He had done for my soul, and I was encouraged in so doing. The next day being the Sabbath, I had three opportunities of confessing in public, and I availed myself of them. Every time I confessed it I was strengthened. Sometimes when severely tempted, I wished myself in the pulpit, that I might break the power of the temptation by a public confession. At last I resolved I would never doubt again. I determined to live not by feel-

ing, but by faith, and the less feeling, the more faith I would exercise. Yea, if it should come to pass that I had no feeling, I would dare to believe that through Christ I was accepted and saved from all sin. Through all the varying circumstances of life I resolved, in the strength of God's grace, to commit the keeping of my soul to my Saviour, assured that He was "able to keep me from falling, and to present me faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy."

Nearly eight years have passed since I received this blessing. During this period I have never doubted the power of Christ to preserve me, and He has kept me from falling. My joy in the Lord has been ever-increasing, and now my hope is full. Jesus saves me. I want more and more of His Spirit. I want more and more of His power, that I may speak to others of His love, and win them from the paths of sin.

During this period I have constantly proclaimed this as the privilege of every child of God. Some have believed my testimony, and have entered into "the rest of faith," and are now enjoying the blessings of the spiritual Canaan. Some who have entered have, I fear, gone back through "the sin which doth so easily beset us," namely, unbelief. I pray that if any such read this they may be induced to return unto their rest. Others who have heard the testimony have not mixed faith with their hearing, and are still in the wilderness of doubts and fears. Some have opposed the truth through ignorance; others, I fear, because it came into contact with their cherished sins; but still I have continued to testify. Of late I have been much cheered by the success which God has given to my testimony for Jesus.

The reception of this blessing, I may add, has greatly intensified my love to Christ and to perishing sinners. It has made my ministry more successful, for it has led me to rely more upon the Spirit in my endeavours to save the people from death. When addressing them I have often felt I could with propriety say, "As though God did beseech you by" me, I "pray you in Christ's stead be ye reconciled to God."

JOSEPH NIELD.

—*King's Highway.*]

Editor's Portfolio.

ALONE WITH GOD.

—
BY J. LAWSON.
—

Alone with God : no other place so sweet ;
Fain would I ever dwell at Jesus' feet
To worship Him, free from all worldly care,
In holy solitude and earnest prayer.

Alone with God : when grief o'erwhelms the
soul,
And boisterous waves in fury round us roll,
How sweet thence to repair, there to unload
Our weary, burdened souls, alone with God !

Alone with God : where^z earthly friends are
not,
And cruel enemies our ruin plot,
We still a refuge have, a safe retreat—
Alone with God, at Jesus' blessed feet.

Alone with God : though earthly comforts fail,
And all the powers of hell our souls assail,
We fear them not, with Jesus for our friend,
For all who trust in Him will He defend.

Alone with God : let men and devils rage,
In secret prayer my soul shall then engage ;
Nor will I fear, for they can never harm
Me while I trust in His Almighty arm.

Alone with God : the busy world outside,
In holy quiet, there would I abide ;
My griefs and troubles all to God make known,
In humble confidence, with Him alone.

Alone with God : how vain all earthly things
Compared with converse with the King of
Kings !

O, blessed privilege to mortals given—
Sweet, quiet, blest communion with Heaven !

JAPAN.

SINCE our last issue we received a letter from the Rev. Geo. Cochran, dated Yokohama. Our readers will be glad to know that the Mission work of our church in Japan is most encouraging. Two converts have been baptized—the first fruits of Methodist effort in Japan. It is delightful to know that the two young men referred to have not only embraced Christianity as a system, but, as Bro. Cochran expresses it, have been “translated, with a beautiful experience, ‘into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God.’” After referring to the two converts whom he had baptized, Bro. Cochran says:—“I am persuaded there are many others in the same case, earnestly desiring to know the truth. Their native superstitions yield no satisfaction to the cravings of an immortal spirit, and I believe they are a people prepared of the Lord to receive with joy the Gospel of His grace. I expect to see wonderful changes here in favor of Christianity within a few years. Since our church has resolved to enter the foreign field, a better than Japan could not have been selected.”

EARTHLY TREASURE.

ONE day when Alcibiades was boasting of his wealth, and the great estates he had in possession,—which too generally cause pride in young people of high rank,—Socrates carried him to a geographical map, and asked him to find Attica. It could scarcely be perceived upon the draft ; he found it, however, though with much difficulty ; but upon being desired to point out his own estate there,—“It is too small,” said he, “to be distinguished in so little a space.” “See, then,” replied the philosopher, “how much you are affected about an imperceptible point of land.”

COMPLETENESS IN CHRIST.

HOLINESS does not change the essential qualities of mind, nor make us omniscient, or all-knowing; hence, "We cannot always decide the right or wrong in matters entirely dependent on human judgment or skill, and in such questions often err, and, erring in judgment, we err in the practice it leads too," which, therefore, may sometimes seem to others inconsistent with our profession. But not claiming to be perfect except in trust, we submit ourselves to the infinite skill and moulding power of our infinite Father, and are being perfected in holiness; are even now "complete in him," or as the original expression literally is, "ye are filled by him."

Words fail me to express the exceeding preciousness of Jesus to me, as a daily, a complete Saviour. He is indeed my light and my salvation, my life and my all. He is made of God unto me, even me, wisdom, righteousness, justification, sanctification, and redemption. He is to me, "Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace." Glory to his name!

"All my longings are contented,
All my wanderings turn to him."

He is my daily constant companion, my best and dearest friend, my Elder Brother. He is my Saviour from sin. He leads me and guides me and keeps me, and will afterward receive me into glory.

DAILY PRAYER MEETING.

FOR about four months past a Noon Prayer Meeting has been held daily, in one of the Class Rooms of St. James-street church, Montreal. Manifest good has resulted in several cases from this meeting, and the brethren engaged in it are encouraged to persevere. Friends from other parts of the country who may come to Montreal will be heartily welcomed at the Noon Prayer Meeting.

A GOOD ILLUSTRATION.

REV. DR. WAUGH, one of our missionaries in India, says that the Hindoos and Mohanmedans almost universally concede the depravity of the race. Among the illustrative examples, he gives this from one of the chief men of

Lucknow: "The sinfulness of a man," said he, "is easy enough understood, when we remember that in disposing of a good thing—for instance, milk—we have to carry it to men's doors; but when we wish to furnish that which is evil—that is, to sell rum—we have but to open a shop, and they come to us. That is," continued the man, "we will make sacrifice to destroy ourselves, but none to help ourselves."

If a man looks for God, God knows that he is looking. He that seeks is sought. Take trouble to win a blessing harder for you than for others, and you shall have one bestowed on you better than you sought for.

Kind hearts are the gardens,
Kind thoughts are the rooves,
Kind words are the blossoms,
Kind deeds are the fruits.

Love is the sweet sunshine
That warms into life,
For only in darkness
Grow hatred and strife.

WHEN RICHARD WATSON died, he remarked: "I shall see strange sights to-day, but it is not the glitter and glare, the topaz and diamond—no, it is *God* I want to see." And they shall see his face."

Reader, how does your heart respond to this experience? Does this touchstone reveal a Christian's love, or must you honestly say, "None of those things move me, neither is there beauty in him that I desire." Are you blind to the vision? O, anoint your eyes with eye-salve that you may see. Cry with the urgency of BARTIMEUS, "Thou Son of DAVID, have mercy upon me!" And he will open thine eyes. Then, with all saints, will you be able to comprehend the height, depth, length and breadth of his grace, and know the love of *Jesus only*.

WHILE ten men watch for chances, one man makes chances; while ten men wait for something to turn up, one turns something up; so while ten fail, one succeeds and is called a man of luck, the favorite of fortune. There is no luck like pluck, and fortune most favors those who are indifferent to fortune.

GOD IS KNOCKING AT THE DOOR.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock."—REV. III. 20.

With Expression.

[Music by DR. BESSEY.

1 God is knocking, ev - er knocking, At the heart's thrice bolt-ed door ;

Which we're lock-ing, ev - er lock - ing, As we oft have done be - fore ;

And we hear, yet hearing heed not, While we fast - er bolt the door.

REFRAIN.

rit.

Hear it, mort - al! op - en quick - ly, God is wait - ing at the door.

2 He is calling,
Ever calling,
In a soft and gentle tone,
To the fallen
And the falling,
To the weary and the lone ;
Still they answer not the summons,
Till the Spirit-voice has flown.

3 He's entreating;
E'er entreating,
By His mercy, by His care ;
Knocking, knocking,
And repeating ;
Calling, calling—this His prayer :
"Let me enter!" Hear it, mortal,
Open wide the sin-lock'd portal.