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SERMON

PREACHED IN

ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, MONTREAL,

ON THE 9TH APRIL, 1854,

ON BEHALF OF THE

Ladies' Benevolent Institution.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM BOND.

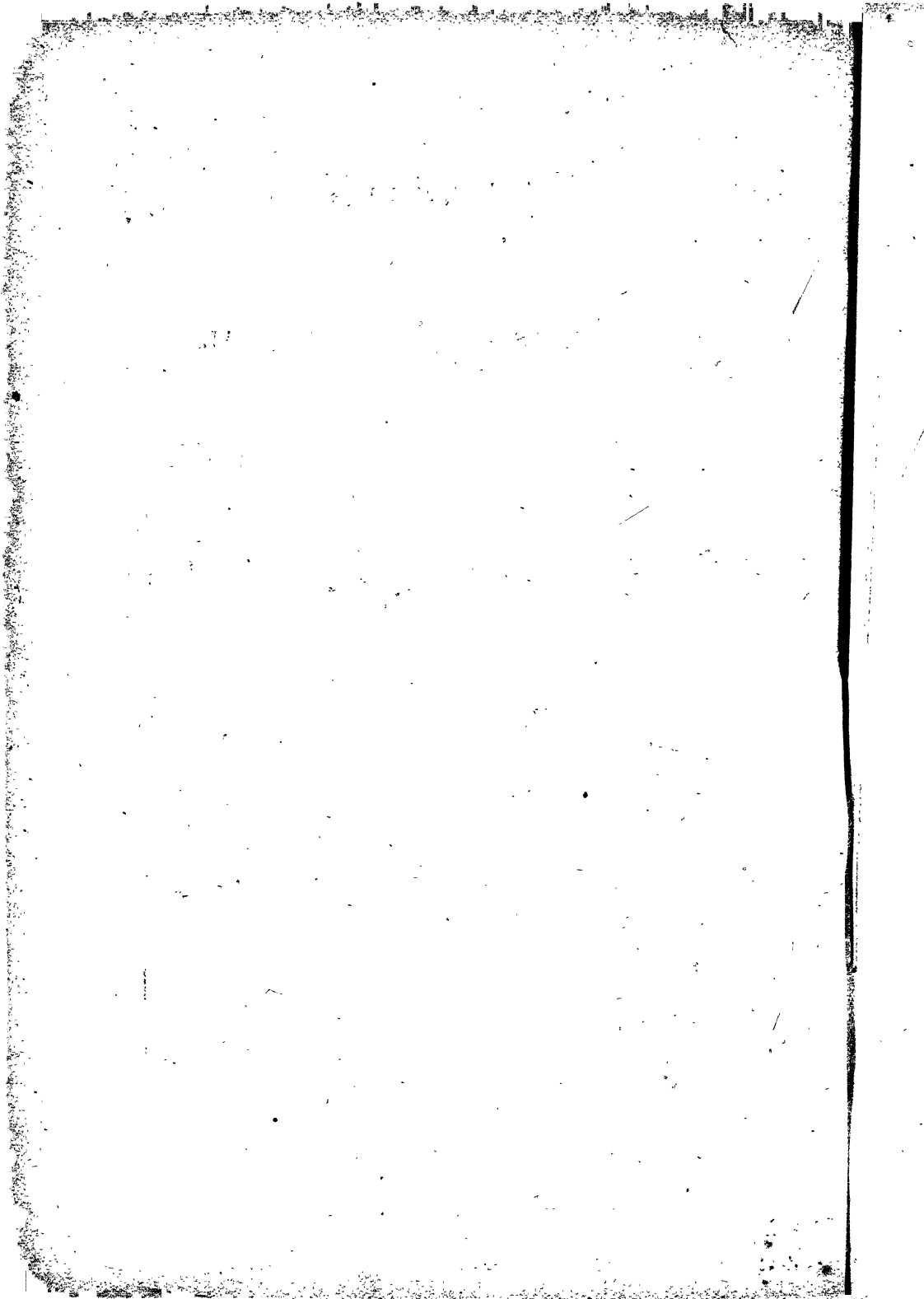
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MONTREAL:

PRINTED BY JOHN LOVELL, AT HIS STEAM-PRINTING ESTABLISHMENT,
ST. NICHOLAS STREET.

1854.

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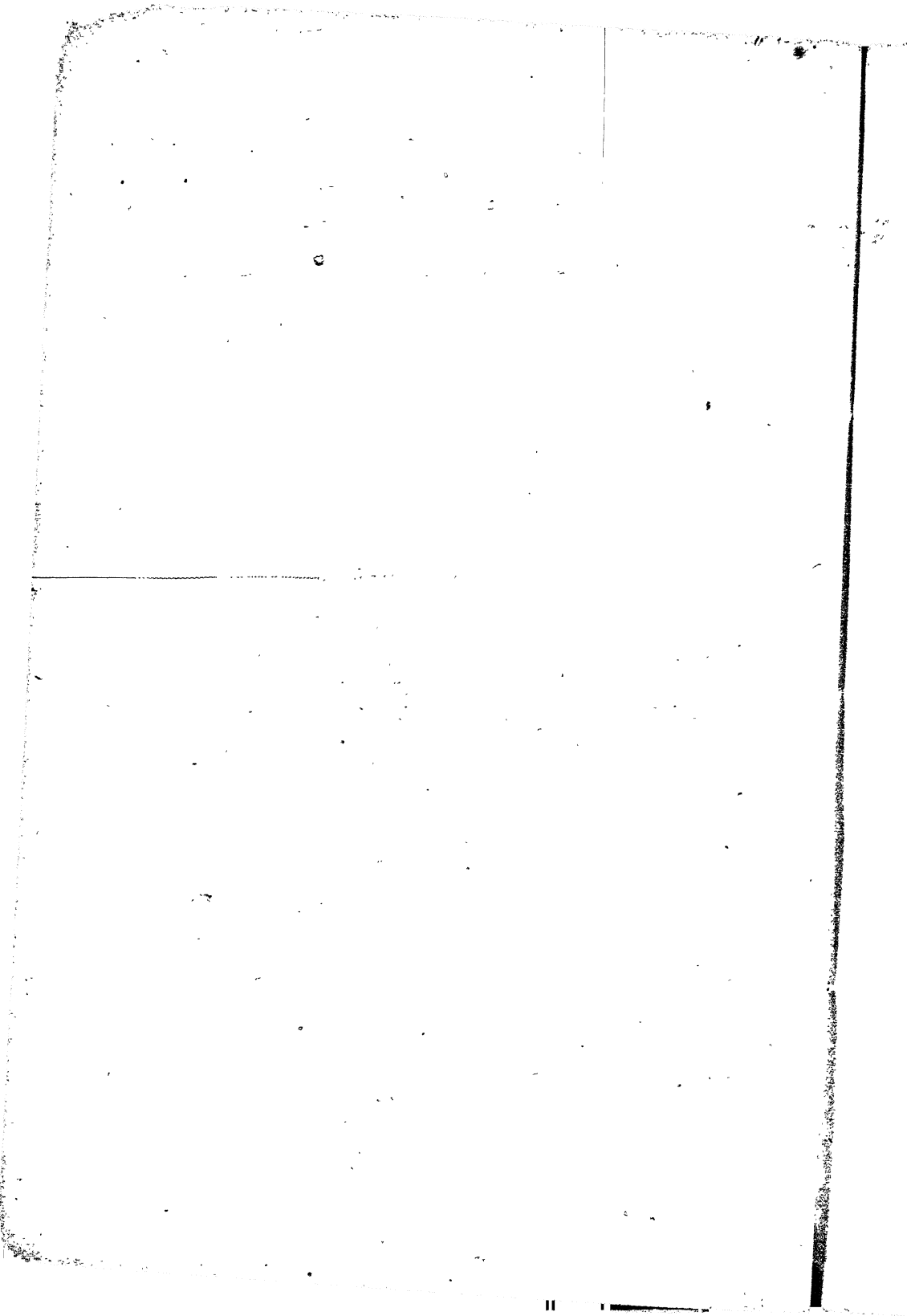
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TO THE REV. WM. BOND.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

We, the undersigned Managers and Office Bearers of the LADIES' BENEVOLENT INSTITUTION, belonging to your Congregation, would respectfully request your consent to the publication of the Sermon preached by you last Sunday, on behalf of that Institution.

A friend to our Asylum, also a member of St. George's, has promised to get it published, in the hope, that the cause of charity *generally* may be benefitted, and the hearts of the readers touched, by its strong reasoning on the love of God to us, as an inducement to all who love Christ, for increased efforts of charity and kindness to their fellow beings; and that this *particular* charity, may have the additional benefit of the probable profits of its sale; several having expressed a wish to purchase, who, from the state of the weather were prevented from hearing it on Sunday.

Hoping you will think favourably of our request, and thanking you, in the name of our Association, for this and your many kindnesses and remembrances of the poor inmates of the Institution, whom we hope this Sermon may bring more under the notice of the Public.

We remain,

Rev. and dear Sir,

Your obliged friends,

C. H. OGDEN,
FANNY EVANS,
M. E. RAE,
G. H. SCUGALL,
J. L. LAVICOUNT,
M. M. D. FREER,
E. ROBINSON,
C ROBINSON,

C. MACKAY,
E. M. CRAWFORD,
SARAH LOVELL,
MARY B. WHITNEY,
M. F. MACDOUGALL,
S. E. DIXON,
JANE WINN.

MONTREAL, 11th April 1854.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

I have great pleasure in acceding to your request, and place the Sermon in your hands, with the prayer, that it may be accompanied by the power and blessing of the Spirit of God.

I remain,

Your obedient servant in Christ,

WM. BOND.

SERMON.

“Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”—Matt. xxv. 40.

God is love; and notwithstanding all our rebellions, and all our transgressions, and all our cold, hard indifference—there is not one of us, but is the object of the vast and tender solitudes of His mighty existence; for, as Jesus testifies, and as a thousand, nay, a life filled with instances of love, as it is filled with moments, witnesseth; “the Father Himself loveth you.”

And His Gospel is simply a message conveying to us an *assurance* of that love, an assurance that notwithstanding our unworthiness—notwithstanding our unwillingness, He waits to be gracious, and will receive us without harshness and without upbraiding; with the sweetest and most endearing love.

Now the effect of this message of love, when received into the heart, is to produce love; we from thence have known and believed the love that God hath to us; and it immediately gathers us as it were into its embrace, and imparts to us

its very nature : we go forth loving God, and loving as God loves, not the lovely and the attractive *only, nor specially*—but the poor and the humble and the destitute. We feel the love of Christ constraining us, and constraining our yearning souls *mainly* towards such, as He Himself came to seek and to save, the lost, the sinner, the diseased, the weeping, the bereaved, the broken-hearted, the contrite, and those who know what it is to feel the burning secret tear, fall upon the heart like molten lead constraining us ; for God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.

See ye not then the power with which the passage before us appeals to every Christian heart ? love ye Christ who *so* loveth you ? look then upon the poor old widow ; the little destitute, in that worst of earthly conditions, forsaken by father and mother ; they are waiting to-day to receive at your hands, the effects and fruits of your love ; and Jesus stands and whispers within by His Spirit, “inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” May our gracious and Heavenly Father move you by His love, to deal bountifully this day, with the Ladies’ Benevolent Association for which I plead.

But in asking at your hands this consideration, I would lay before you certain truths, which by the tenderness they display and the love they exhibit, discover more clearly the force of the appeal and its constraining power to liberality,

it is received as "done unto me" saith Jesus : that it is an appeal to the mightiest motive within the Christian's heart.

1st. There is no salvation but by God's mercy : —since man hath fallen, and if left to himself, would continue to fall for eternity in sinfulness and the bottomless pit of perdition, it is impossible to conceive him recovered but by the tender mercy of our God, whereby the day spring from on High hath visited us ; we may wonder, and search and question concerning the origin of evil, the innate energy of the soul, the sinfulness of sin, as we will ; we shall assuredly find written upon every truth, and every promise that leads to the hope of salvation, mercy, mercy —free unmerited mercy ; the most righteous will sing with David, "I trust in the *mercy* of God for ever and ever ;" and the conscious and self-accusing sinner will fasten simply upon the promise, "I will be merciful unto their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

Nor doth the full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction, made for the sins of the whole world, derogate at all from the mercy of God ; as it was mercy that devised and completed the stupendous scheme of redeeming a lost world, by the life of the God-man, so it was mercy alone that prompted the *acceptance* of the ransom ; mercy as much shines forth from the Divine mind, and appeals to the listening world, when the Almighty looks upon His only begotten Son, and decides that He shall give His life

for the world, and proclaims, "I have found a ransom;" as when with tender entreaty, He cries "return unto me for I have redeemed thee." The death of Christ no more destroyed the *mercy* of the act of salvation, than it could the tender love with which the Father from eternity regarded the Son; it was an atonement, but mercy alone prompted the acceptance of such an atonement; it was the death of a substitute, but mercy alone permitted the substitute; it was God's own son; but, oh, surely it was mercy, unheard of mercy towards miserable sinners, which consented, that the blood, and groans, and woe of Jesus, should satisfy the demands of justice against the rebellious and polluted sons of men.

2nd. There is, however, no *mercy* but through Christ. Mercy is one of the glorious attributes of Deity, but justice and truth as it were on either side hold back her arms, as she would stretch them forth unconditionally for the embrace of the sinner. Man may ask why did not God show mercy towards the fallen without exacting a costly sacrifice? why did He not proclaim mercy without money and without price? but this indeed would have been a far *more* costly sacrifice. He would have paid down His own attributes, have undeified Himself, and stood before His universe, a partial and an imperfect God, but that were impossible, God exercising mercy without regard to justice and truth; and so Jesus is set forth as the propitiation for our sins, and the end of the law for righteousness, and the all sufficient sacrifice, and our

advocate and intercessor and mediator. Jesus, by appointment, became the substitute and representative of His people, and bare their sins in His own body on the tree, so that they were crucified in Him ; and now mercy cries to justice and to truth, "restrain me no longer, let me embrace the sinner, who is he that condemneth ? Christ hath died, from henceforth ye cannot withhold me ; mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other ;" and she comes forth to the sinner, pleading with him, "fear not sinner, all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him, Amen, unto the glory of God by us ; be not dismayed because of thine enemies and because of thine imperfections, and because of thine often provocations. He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them," faint not because of the awful holiness and august and glorious truth and justice of the Almighty, "for after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, according to His mercy. He saved us, that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life ;" and thus, when we see all hope centering in Christ, and every promise pointing to the slain Lamb, we must perceive that there is no mercy but through Christ, that "there is none other name under Heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

3rd. Still there *is no interest in Christ*, but by *faith*. God, in His sovereign wisdom and will

hath appointed faith as the means by which the sinner is united to Christ, and made to participate in all the blessings of His perfect salvation ; without this we have no life in us, and no part in Christ : and for us the cross hath been borne in vain, so far as eternal life is concerned ; as well might God's own Son have never descended from the Heavens if He be not fastened on by faith, (except indeed, that this is the greater condemnation of all who neglect Him) : we are as a branch severed from the vine—as men in the sunlight, whose eyes are blinded ; if we are without faith, there is neither light nor spiritual life ; this is the witness of the Apostles, “ being justified by *faith*, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,” and this is the saying of our Lord Himself, “ He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him ;” and not only so, faith is the eye of the soul, to which alone God reveals Himself, by the Gospel of Christ, as it is written, “ therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith ;” so that without faith there is no interest in Christ and no possibility of pleasing God.

4th. And that only is saving faith which worketh by love. There is a belief, which seems to have no more effect upon the heart than the sun upon the snow clad Alps ; there is a belief that seems to have only the effect that it had upon Judas, *despair*, but for that it is mighty enough, it makes the devils tremble ;

but the faith we speak of is as gentle as it is mighty ; it melts the hard heart, and it removes the mountains of difficulties, and it goes forth conquering and to conquer, and that because it works by love ; this is always its characteristic ; and indeed it could not be otherwise ; it fastens upon Christ as the sinners alone hope for mercy and salvation, and discerns the greatness of His love for us, and every faculty and energy of the soul seems pervaded by but one principle, love for Christ ; it is never absent, and without hesitation we can always say of Jesus to the believer, "whom having not seen ye love, in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice, with joy unspeakable and full of glory ; receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."

5th. But there is no love for Christ, without love to His people ; He has so identified Himself with them, that you can no more separate in your love and hatred, the members and the body, than you can Christ and His people ; "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me," is His own testimony ; and we know what the apostle thinks and writes of those who say they love God and yet hate their brother. No, my friends, that man never yet existed who truly loved Jesus, and yet had no love for the souls for whom Jesus died.

6th. And there can be no love to His people without seeking to advance their temporal and spiritual welfare ; love is always active, always

self denying, always moving to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, always doing good to the souls and bodies of men. Amongst the vrey first questions that the child of God asks, after he has known the kindness and love of God our Saviour, is, what can I do for Christ? how can I shew *some* sense of His exceeding great love? how can I manifest the depths of my gratitude, the yearnings of my soul? and we are never at a loss for a reply, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me," saith Christ; "let the depths of your love overflow upon the poor and destitute around you; there is the widow, make her heart sing for joy; there is the orphan, let his sad eye look up to you with the tear of gratitude; there are the ignorant, let their souls bless you, when they look upon you; there are the sick and the sorrowful, let them have cause to welcome you as a gleam of sunshine in a dark place." And be ye assured of this, that where there is little or nothing of such actions towards our fellow creatures, there is no love for God, for "whoso hath this world's goods and seeth his brother have need and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him." There is much of what is called philanthropy and speculative philosophy in the world; much that theorizes, upon the condition of the poor and those that are out of the way; many who *write* eloquently and *talk* fluently upon the subject; but love *acts* and *works*; love is practical; love is wise through

that wisdom which cometh down from above; love seems *intuitively* to discern the right course, but the *intuition* is only in *appearance*; love has been taught in the school of Christ, and it deals with a fellow man as with a *brother*; as one, who if not now the Temple of the Holy Ghost, may yet, through sparing grace, have the Spirit of Christ dwelling in him, as one for whom Christ died, and whose interests are eternal; and therefore love, whilst it cares for his present and craving necessities, seeks to lift him from his present degradation, seeks to implant a living principle which, whilst it causes him to live for *eternity*, makes him a *great* man, because a godly man for *time*. Love hath learnt both sides of *this* lesson, on one side "thou shalt in anywise rebuke thy neighbour and not suffer sin upon him," on the other, "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;" and love every day practises its precepts, of feeding the hungry and clothing the naked, as well as striving to save the soul.

7th. While doing this, the believer disclaims all merit in himself; there is always a vivid consciousness of his own unworthiness; he never looks up with the proud Pharisee, saying, "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are," but with the feeling, "of thine own have I given thee;" "thou God knowest my foolishness, and my guiltinesses are not hid from thee;" he never looks abroad upon his fellows with contempt, but with a depressing sense of the infirmities which he knows, and with the acknowledgment,

“by the grace of God I am what I am;” and “His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain, but I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me;” the brightest portion of a man’s faith is his humility; the surest mark of a counterfeit faith, his thought of merit. The proud man cannot be a believer, the humble man, at least, is near the kingdom of heaven.

8th. Such a faith proves a man to be in reality a Christian; “by their fruits ye shall know them; we do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles;” and we do not see the works of love;—souls cared for; the Scriptures circulated in the spirit of prayer; efforts made to spread the kingdom of Jesus in the world, and in individual hearts; the poor and the destitute and the miserable, comforted and sustained; and all this, with a humble sense of nothingness;—we do not behold these fruits of the spirit in those who are after the flesh; we know that these are the witnesses by whom, in the great day of account, men’s faith will be tried; that love for Jesus will not be proved by the fact, that men cried often, “Lord, Lord,” or simply made long prayers and a loud profession; but what were their deeds? did they from a sense of God’s love and mercy, manifested towards them by Jesus Christ, from a faith in His salvation by the blood of the Cross, consecrate themselves to His service and sanctify the Lord God in their hearts, and so go forth day by day, saying, “what shall I render unto the Lord?”

did they, as seeing by faith Him who is invisible, walk with Jesus, going about doing good? did they loose the bands of wickedness? undo the heavy burden? let the oppressed go free? break every yoke? deal their bread to the hungry? bring the poor that were cast out, to their house? cover the naked, and visit the fatherless and the widow? did love for Jesus thus constrain them? and if so, we know the verdict, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me," "Come ye blessed of my Father."

Beloved, to such principles and feelings in you I appeal today; with hopes, founded upon the belief, that if you love Jesus, you will rejoice in the opportunity of bearing forth its fruits; I lay before you the object for which I solicit your aid.

First of all. Pray consider; this Association provides the only asylum for aged and infirm women of the Protestant faith which this city possesses:* and there are twenty now in the

*Two only, of the many instances, which might be adduced to prove the necessity and usefulness of this Institution, in cases of extreme destitution, may be mentioned; one was that of a little girl about 4 years of age, who was found in an open shed, on the outskirts of the Town, forsaken by a drunken father, sitting in the snow, on a cold winter's night, where she would have perished, had she not been providentially discovered by some benevolent person, who made her case known to one of the Managers of the Institution, by whom she was immediately admitted.

The other, was a person of advanced age, and slightly deranged in intellect. She was found in a gateway perfectly helpless and speechless from want of food, her case was not admissible at the Hospital, as she had no actual disease; and the person by whom she was found, offered payment to several to admit her into their houses; but in vain: the fear of troubles, or of infection hindered each, and for three hours she was driven about the

house. True, they are poor ; true, many of them were deplorably ignorant ; true, they are old, and might without this refuge, have gone down to the grave ; ere this, shivering and hungry, cursing the day of their birth, true, they are infirm, and might have been left to their misery, which would have soon laid them in the silent tomb ; true, the busy selfish world would not miss them ; in its eyes they are poor and of no reputation, and cannot command its sympathy : but all this commends them to our hearts. We think of our mothers, and our souls yearn for these aged women. We think of what we owe to woman ; her softening, elevating, purifying, gladdening influence ; her fond companionship in the seasons of joy ; her devoted tenderness in the hours of sickness ; her deep, rich, healing sympathy and love, eclipsing all other value and every failing when sorrow bends the spirit of man, and troubles cloud and crush his heart ; we think of this, and the *sex* of these inmates of the asylum plead irresistibly within our breasts.

We think of them too, as immortal souls for whom Jesus died ; many of whom, we expect to meet and recognize on the threshold of eternity, as having been carried there before us by angels ; we think of all this, and their very poverty and infirmity, and grey hairs, speak to our affections ; even when our hearts are respond-

Town, in this miserable state of destitution and helplessness, seeking shelter and a resting place ; until at length, she was admitted into this Asylum, although at the time so full, that some of the inmates were obliged to have temporary beds made up for them on the floor.

ing to the voice of Jesus, as he says, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the *least* of these my brethren ye have done it unto me."

And again consider. This Association is the only Protestant home for poor children who have not lost both parents. Yes, they are often the offspring of the dissolute; they commonly find an early grave, and if they do not die, they soon grow up to viciousness and crime; and then the country provides for them penal laws and penitentiaries, where they soon get perfected in sin, and hardened in iniquity. There are now fifty-five within the building, whose end, but for this refuge, might have been the darkest we can imagine; and if we could forget, that these fifty-five, left to crime and misery, would surely bring upon the community their measure of retribution,—and if we could persuade ourselves that there would be no upbraidings in the great day of account; if we could strip them of all the importance which this throws over them, and regard them only as a company of little destitute ones; yet to every loving heart, is their power, in that sweet saying of the Saviour, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Nor is this all; there is none other place to which the widow left in poverty, can look for a shelter for her fatherless children, whilst she bravely buffets with the world, and seeks with holy independence, to work with her hands, the thing which is good, and thus be enabled to

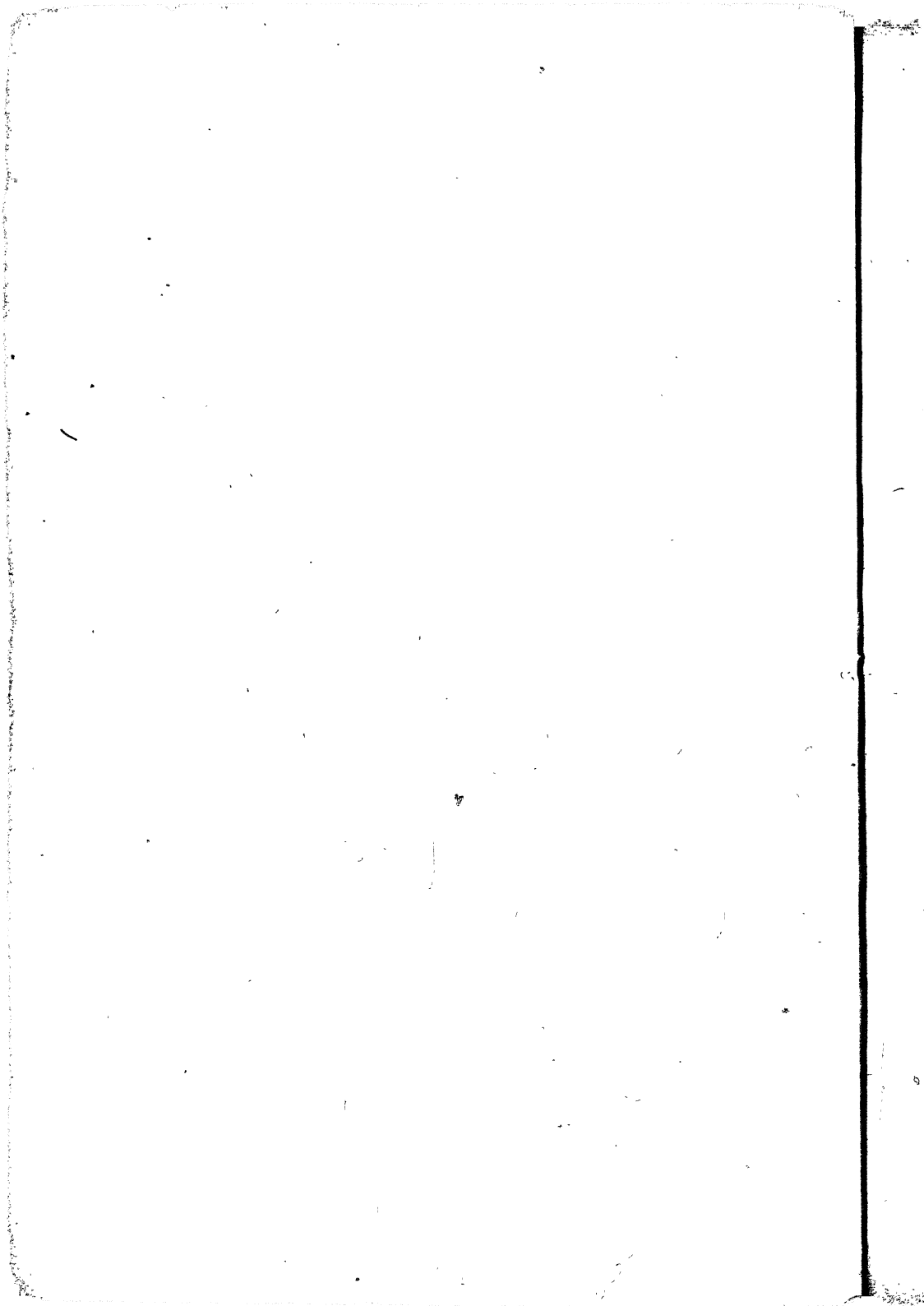
earn an honest livelihood ; and God cares for the widow, His eye regardeth the fatherless ; He ever seems to make them his especial care ; and if ye will work with Him, in providing for their necessities, and aiding in their labours ; the widows too shall appear, when it is approvingly said, " Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of *these* my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

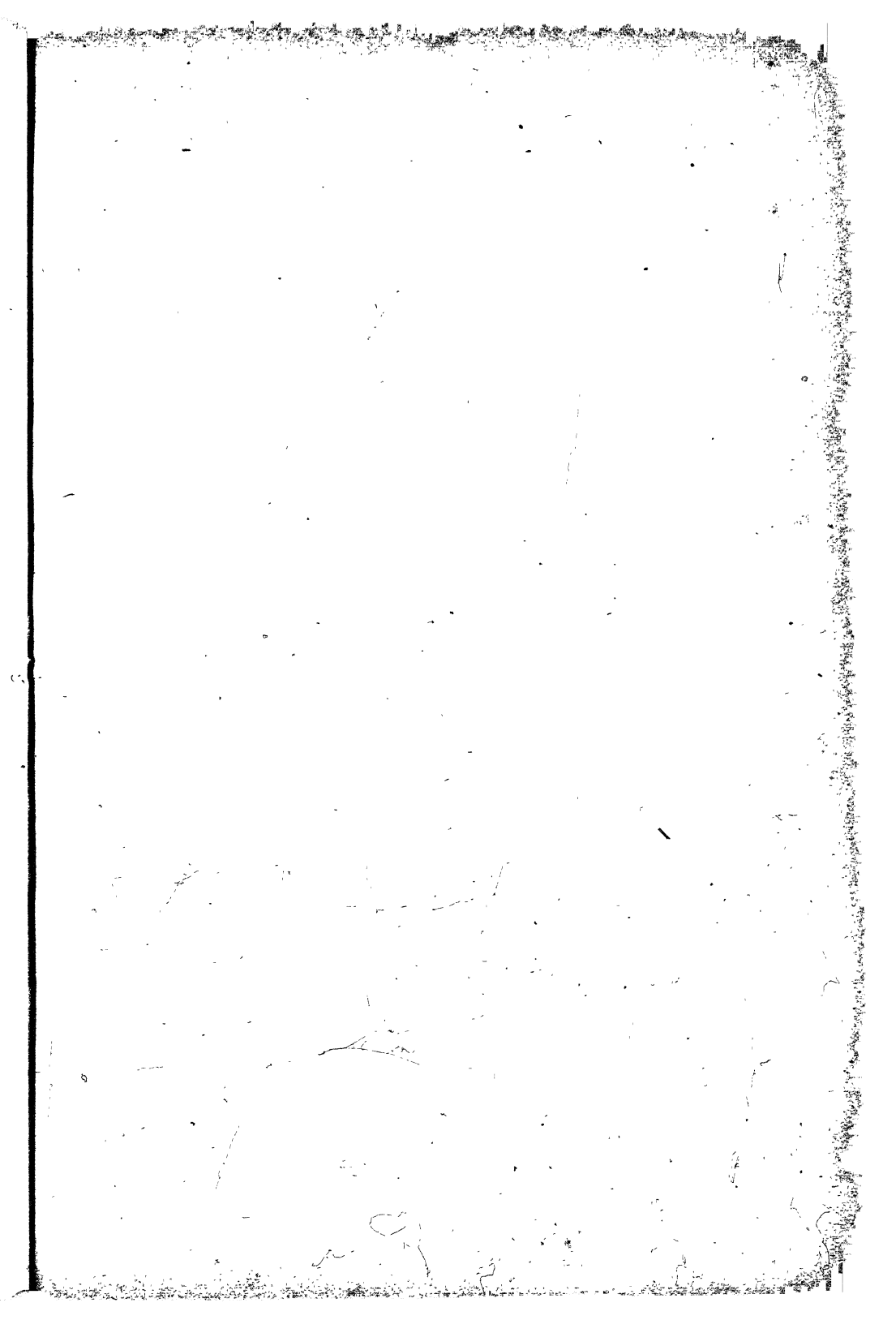
But the care doth not stop in providing a refuge only. The children attend Sunday School. A day school under the direction of a Committee of young Ladies is held in the house, at which a good elementary education is given; the spiritual wants of the inmates are attended to, by the periodical visits of Clergymen ; and the Scriptures are read to those who from infirmity, or want of education cannot read for themselves.

And to the Institution thus constituted, your assistance will now be peculiarly acceptable. This winter has been a trying one throughout the community, and the Ladies' Benevolent Institution has not been exempt ; scarlet fever, whooping cough, and other diseases to which children are particularly subject, have succeeded each other in the house ; and led to additional expense. The insufficiency of the present building has added to the discomfort and distress ; this, through the liberality of the community will be remedied in another year, but it is to be borne in mind, that a large house will open the door to greater expenditure, as the benevolent Ladies who manage the Institution are ever

unwilling to refuse an application, from a fit recipient of their bounty, while there is room.

Now, in asking at your hands this assistance, I know I am asking that which may be able to procure you much present gratification; but in withholding it, will you not be acting cruelly towards yourselves? will there be no misgivings now, and accusations hereafter? will it satisfy you, if you keep for yourselves what might have covered the naked and fed the hungry; will it be pleasant to you to know, that you might have comforted the sorrowing and the destitute, but you turned away to your own pleasures and your own gratifications? or will it not rather be infinitely more delightful, that you now listen to the cry of the aged, and the widow and the orphan, and though it be at some expense of present selfishness, that you have their *prayers for you*, rather than their *reproaches against you*, May God direct you by His Spirit.





LADIES' BENEVOLENT INSTITUTION.

House of the Institution, Mountain Street, near St. Antoine Street,

Where donations of clothing, meat, bread, or any article of domestic utility, will be gratefully accepted.

— Aged and infirm women, belonging to all Protestant denominations are admitted. There are at present twenty,—one blind, one paralyzed, one bedridden for upwards of six years, several of them very old, (one who died there during the past year was upwards of 90,) and nearly all helpless from sickness or infirmity of some kind.

The children, all deprived of one Parent, and in *most* cases, neglected or forsaken by the other.

A subscription of five dollars yearly gives the power of voting on the admission of an applicant.

TREASURER TO THE SOCIETY,

MISS MITCHELL, Montreal Bank, to whom the benevolent are requested to send their subscriptions.

Montreal, May, 1854.