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## HE WHO SERVES GOD SERVES A GOOD MASTER.

"Remember, I must have the bridle on Monday," said Mr. Harcourt, as he turned to leave a shop where he had been giving some orders about his harness.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Mr. Benson, the master, coming forward, "but it will not be possible to get it done by Monday."

"Not possible," returned Mr. Harcourt, stopping short. "What nonsense! Why, there is all to-morrow."

"To-morrow is Sunday, sir," returned the shopman firmly, but respectfully.

"Well, what of that?"

"We don't work on a Sunday, sir."

"Then I shall go to those who do.—"

You can put the bridle in the carriage," added Mr. Harcourt, turning to the man to whom he had given the order.

"We can get it done by Tuesday, sir, without fail," interposed Mr. Benson.

"Tuesday will be too late," returned Mr. Harcourt, and then without another word, he stepped out of the shop, and bidding his groom take the bridle from the man, he got into his Phaeton and drove off, muttering to himself, "The old humbug! I will make him repent his folly."

Mr. Benson watched the carriage till it turned the corner of the street, then, with something like a sigh, went back to his seat, and continued his work. He had lost Mr. Harcourt's custom—he felt sure of that.

He was a new customer, just recommended to him by a person whom he greatly desired to oblige, and he was a man who knew what good work was, and who did not mind what he paid for it, and paid promptly, too; and just now such employment would have been invaluable to Mr. Benson.

He had had some heavy losses in trade, followed by sickness in his own family, and a little ready money coming in at this moment would have set him all right again. It was a sore temptation that had just tried him, no doubt about it; and his heart smote him as he thought how near he had been to yielding; but, thanks be to God, who giveth the victory, the temptation had been conquered, and as Mr. Ben-

son sat down to his work again, it was with a tranquil feeling, as he remembered that he who serves God serves a good Master, and may be content to look to Him for his wages.

It was some few hours after Mr. Harcourt had left the shop that Mr. Wilcox, a clever, pushing saddler, who lived in an adjoining street, came bustling in, looking wonderfully cockahoop and elated.

"Well, Benson," said he, as he rubbed his hands one over the other with uncommon glee, "you have been and done it that is all."

"Done what?" inquired Benson, as he looked up quietly from his work, making a good guess, however, as to his visitor's meaning.

"Knocked down your own luck with one hand, and given it to me with the other."

"You mean, I suppose, that Mr. Harcourt drove on from my shop to yours."

"Exactly; and I thought the least I could do was to come and thank you, and tell you how happy I should be to work for as many more as you like to send."

"I need not tell you I shall not send you those that I can keep," replied Mr. Benson, trying hard not to show that he was annoyed: "but, God helping me, I will never go against my conscience—not for any man nor any money."

"Well, every one to their taste. These are not days to refuse good work when it is offered; and as to your scruples, they are all nonsense, just as if there was any sin in putting a needle and thread through a bit of leather on a Sunday. The better the day the better the deed."

"Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath-day. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all that thou hast to do; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt do no manner of work." They are plain words, and there is no mistaking their meaning," said Benson, quietly.

"Oh, if it comes to quoting Scriptures," returned Wilcox, with a sneer, "I can quote text for text.—The Sabbath was

made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.'"

"I do not see as the one text takes away from the other," replied Benson. God gave the Sabbath to man, knowing well that a day of rest is as necessary for the good of a man's body as it is for the well-being of his soul. That is just the beauty of God's laws—they are made quite as much for man's good as for His own glory."

"That is a cut above me," said Wilcox. "I only know I will never turn my back on a good order. I know my own advantage a little too well for that."

"Has it ever struck you," asked Benson, looking up from his work, "that a man may be out of his calculations when he thinks himself wiser than his Maker?"

Wilcox fidgetted a little uneasily, and Benson continued—"When I was a youngster I lived for a short time with a celebrated surgeon, and I remember well his saying that the animal part of our nature needed rest, at least once in seven days.—He was not a religious man, and, therefore, he did not bring it forward in a religious point of view. It was simply, he wanted to get the most work possible out of those about him, and he always took care that his horses and his servants had, at least, one day's rest in the seven. Many is the story I have heard him tell of the way horses wore out, and human strength broke down, without one day's rest, and that is a truth any man can find out for himself."

"But even if I were to grant you that, just for the sake of the argument," returned Wilcox, "if a man wants to get on in the world, he must be ready to risk something to carry his point."

"I think he risks more who goes against God's laws, than he who conforms to them," said Benson.

Wilcox's only answer was a contemptuous shrug of the shoulders.

"It is an old saying," continued Benson, "that 'honesty is the best of policy,' and, to my way of thinking, the same truth holds good in respect to godliness. As far as my experience goes, I have found the Apostle was quite in the right when he said, 'Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come.'"

"I cannot say my experience runs in the same line," returned Wilcox.

"Keep God's commands, and never fear but he will keep you. It is a safe line of action, and I am not afraid to hold it," said Benson.

"Well, so long as you are satisfied, that is all that signifies," replied Wilcox; "but I think you would be puzzled to tell me of any man's worldly prospects that were ever improved by neglecting his worldly business."

"That is not exactly the way in which I put the case," said Benson; "But I can tell you an instance of a man whose worldly prospects have been wonderfully improved by his neglecting what the world would call his open and manifest interest."

"How so?"

"You know Lennox?"

"What, the great omnibus Proprietor?"

"Exactly."

"I should think so. All the world knows Lennox. I only wish I stood in his shoes."

"I have known Lennox since he was a boy. In fact, he is a sort of connection of mine—a second cousin. He was such a fine-looking, high-spirited boy, that he took the fancy of Simmons, the horse-dealer, who happened to be buying horses in the town where he lived; Simmons took him up with him to London, and Lennox turned out such a sharp, handy chap, and such a first-rate judge of horses, that he became a sort of right-hand to Simmons, who gave him the run of his house. In course of time Simmons died, and Lennox thinking, I suppose, it would be a good thing to step into such a fine concern, made up to the widow, who, flattered by the admiration of her handsome young suitor, gave him herself and her business."

"I can see the wisdom of the transaction, but I confess, I do not see the sanctity of it," interposed Wilcox, with a laugh.

"For a time all went very smooth," continued Benson, without noticing this remark; "Lennox was contented to enjoy his present good, giving himself very little heed to what might be the future.—He was always amongst the first to seize on

any new idea that seemed likely to be profitable. Accordingly, when omnibuses were first started, he saw in an instant that they were likely to turn out a good speculation, and employing his capital in having two or three built for himself, he started as an omnibus proprietor, and week-days and Sundays his carriages might be seen on the road. It was little enough that Lennox thought of Sunday then. To get a fortune together fast was all that he thought about. But somehow, if it was fast come, it seemed to be fast go. He was constantly complaining of how his men cheated him; how this one overdrove the horses, how that one drank, and how this other embezzled the money. He had but one remedy—himself, his men, and his horses must work the harder, to supply all deficiencies.

"Things were in this state when a new minister came to the parish in which Lennox lived. He was a true servant of God, he was; one who knew that his business on earth was to do his Master's will, and win souls for heaven. Where good was to be done, there you were sure to find Mr. Percival, and it was but little he thought of his own ease or his own comfort, if he could take either the one or the other to the home of sickness or suffering.

"It had been a very different sort of man that had been before him in the parish, and there were many things going on there that cut good Mr. Percival to the quick; but nothing went so much against him as the habit of constant Sunday trading, in which all the most wealthy parishioners indulged. You cannot reap clover off a plot of weeds, that Mr. Percival knew right well, and so he did not expect that seed-time and harvest could come in the same month; but he set himself to work, dropping the good seed here a little, there a little, leaving it to God to give the increase. It was no very easy thing to get into Lennox's house, Lennox did not want him, and 'he had no time to spend in talking about matters that did not concern him,' he said; 'he had enough, and more than enough, of real business on his hands;' and so, many a time Mr. Percival called, and he could never catch sight of his man.

"But though Mr. Percival could not lay hold on Lennox, there was one thing that could and did lay hold on him, and with such a firm grasp as could not be shaken off; and

that was sorrow. Lennox had one only child, a boy, a beautiful little fellow he was, and Lennox loved that child dearly, and when the child was seized with a sudden illness, and lay at death's door, Lennox and his clergyman were, for the first time, brought face to face, and, for the first time, Lennox began to feel there might be something worth living for besides this world of ours, and something more worth having than the money which could not purchase, no, not one hour's more life for his child.—And when the grave closed over that bright boy, it went nigh to break the father's heart, as he exclaimed in the bitterness of his spirit, 'My son, my son, would God that I had died for thee, my son!'

"And if it had not been for Mr Percival, I do think it would have gone hard with him, he was so utterly broken in spirit; but Mr. Percival was not one of them that crush out the smoking flax, and thanks to that good man's counsels, Lennox began to see things in a very different light to that in which he had ever seen them before and in good earnest he tried to turn to the Lord, and to seek and to serve him. But there was one point, however, he could not see, and Mr. Percival could not make him see it, and that was, that he was called upon to give up running his omnibuses on a Sunday.

"'I am not saying that you are not right,' I have heard him say it many a time to Mr. Percival. 'No doubt, sir, it would be better if we could keep close to the letter of the commandment, but it cannot be, sir; competition is too hard upon us. If I did not run my omnibuses on a Sunday, I should be driven off the road, and my fine business would be smashed. I cannot afford that, sir—I cannot, indeed. And you say God is a merciful God, surely in a matter of necessity He will not be extreme to mark what is done amiss.'

"'God is no doubt a merciful, but He is, at the same time, a just and a jealous God,' would Mr. Percival reply. 'He never gave a commandment that He did not mean should be obeyed, and if He insists upon obedience, rely upon it, Lennox, He will accept of no excuse for the wilful breach of any one of His laws. It is not whether we think or do not think it necessary, that is the question; it is that God has said it, and therefore it must be done.'

"But Lennox would not give in, and month followed month, and still, Sunday after Sunday, his omnibuses were running their course. Lennox, meanwhile, was not a happy man. He was serving two masters now, and that is a trade that never answers. He grew morose and silent, and matters did not seem to be going very well with him. A year passed away. It was the anniversary of his little boy's death. I had seen a great deal of him of late, and I happened to go to speak to him on business that very day. He was out when I arrived, and I had to wait for him. When he came in, I was shocked to see how haggard and worn he looked.

"What is the matter, Lennox? Are you ill?" I asked.

"No, not ill," he replied, and then he added quickly, "I have been—been—to his grave, and I have made a resolution there, and, please God, I will keep it, Benson."

"The next Sunday there were none of Lennox's omnibuses to be seen on the road, and he and such of his men as chose to accompany him, attended service at Mr. Percival's church."

"And you want me to believe that his good fortune dates from then," said Wilcox.

"No I do not want you to believe anything of the sort," replied Benson, "for it would not be the truth; leastways, not according as the world judges. The few months that followed on Lennox's change of conduct were very hard months to him. Everything seemed to go cross. Hay and corn were dear, one or two of his best horses died. It was the height of the summer season, when Sunday travelling pays well. Of course there was many a man glad to pick up what he threw away, and so his business declined whilst that of his rivals flourished.

"What a fool Lennox has been," said one, "he has kicked down his own luck."

"Let be," said another. "He will soon learn wisdom by experience, and hark back again."

"But nosuch thing; Lennox had thrown in his lot, once and for ever, with those who feared the Lord. He had counted the cost, and he had made up his mind to pay it. What he lost in God's service on

earth would, he felt sure, be put to the right side of the balance in heaven. He knew the capital was safe, and he was content to wait for the interest.

"And it was not so long neither, before it began to be paid, and in a way, too, in which he had not looked for it. Lennox was not a man to do things by halves.—He was not going to do right himself and stand by and see those in his employ do wrong; and so he gave it at once to be understood, that he would not put up with any swearing and drunkenness, no, nor any Sabbath breaking neither, amongst his men; and that such as did not like to live by his rules, might leave him. Many of the men took him at his word and did leave him: and for a time, Lennox was short-handed, and sadly put about, and had to turn to himself, and do many a thing which he had been accustomed to have done by others. And that was the making of him, for as soon as he got this insight into matters, he began to see how it was it had been fast come, fast go, and to give a shrewd guess that, with all his Sunday trading, it would be long odds but he would be better off without it than with it. Sure enough, a regular system of cheating came to light, and no wonder.

"The men saw that their principal had thought no harm of cheating God out of his rights; why should they see more harm of cheating their master out of his? and so, whilst one party had made money out of God's time, the other had done the same by that which belonged to man."

"It is too absurd," interrupted Wilcox, angrily. "You might as well say at once, Benson, that every man who does not agree with you is a thief."

"May be there is many a thief," replied Benson, beside him who stands before judge and jury. "To my way of thinking, he is a worse thief who steals from God, than he who steals from his fellow-men.—There may be compensation for one fault, there is none for the other. He who steals God's time and takes away His honour, can never pay it back again, here nor hereafter. I am not saying that God, in His mercy, will not forgive us—ay, and more—that for Christ Jesus' sake, He will not on our true repentance, return and abundantly bless our efforts to serve Him; but

I do say, that the more we love Him and serve Him, the more we shall feel that we can never make up for lost opportunities. A wound may be healed, but the scar remains; and though a scar may not hurt, yet it in no way improves one's beauty, and that is just what Lennox feels. He is a prosperous man now, and a wealthy man; but I doubt there are times when the scar shows plain, ay, and the wound aches too, as he looks back on the past and thinks of that little grave in yonder cemetery.

"Be that as it may, it is many a year now since Lennox has found for himself that, 'he who serves God, serves a good Master,' and he always says, that he dates his good fortune from the hour in which he thought himself in greatest difficulty and most hard beset. It was the getting rid of his bad lot of servants that was the making of him; and though there was a hard push for a time, yet, as soon as it was generally known that Lennox was a man of his word; that he gave good wages for a good day's work; that he required no more of any man than that which was right; that he never discharged his servants except for misconduct, why, of course, all the steady men were anxious to serve under a master on whose principles they knew they could rely; and what was the result? His carriages were better cared for, his horses were better driven, waste and extravagance in the stables ceased, and the money which used to find its way into the men's pockets came safely home into the master's till; whilst the horses, profiting no less than their drivers by the change in their circumstances, have thriven so well with their one day's rest in the seven, that the saving in the purchases of new stock has proved no inconsiderable item in the profit sheet of Lennox's yearly account-book."

"And from this, you would argue," said Wilcox, "That I am to throw up Mr. Harcourt's order, affront him, and lose a first-rate customer; thank you, I am not such a fool."

"I am not arguing on the point," returned Benson. "You asked me why I did not undertake Mr. Harcourt's order, and I have told you. You challenged me to show you an instance where a man's worldly advantages were improved by a steady adherence to God's commands, in the face of a possible and apparent loss.—

I have given you one, and I could give you many another. It is not for me to dictate your line of conduct to you, but to keep steadily and consistently to my own. I will not pretend to deny to you, that I was very much put out at losing Mr. Harcourt's connection. But I have no choice in the matter, I have but one course before me—to obey God. He that serves Him, serves a good Master. He never forgets the payment, and if at times a man seems to wait for his wages, it is only the money is being put out to better interest than we can get here. What is good for a man to have will be made up to him some time or other. As for what is not good for him to have, why, he is better without it, there is no doubt about that."

But Wilcox returned to his own shop, he had considerable doubts on the point, and thought his neighbour a great fool and himself a very clever man. The Sunday was spent in executing Mr. Harcourt's order; the harness was sent home on the Monday; the money was promptly paid; a fresh order was given, and Wilcox again congratulated himself on his good luck.

It was some weeks after, and they had been weeks of great trouble to Benson, that another carriage stopped at the door of his shop, a well-appointed dark-green brougham, drawn by a comfortable, sleek-looking horse, and driven by a coachman whose well-to-do appearance was quite in keeping with that of the equipage.

Whilst Benson was wondering who his visitor might be, the carriage-door opened quickly, and a fine-looking man, in military attire, got out, and walked into the shop, with an air of decision as if he was accustomed to give his orders and be promptly obeyed. Glancing round the shop with an eye bright with lurking humour, he took in its arrangements, and made his own estimate of the character of its possessor.

"So," he said, turning to Benson, "you are the impudent fellow who will not work on a Sunday?"

Fortunately for himself, Benson was a good physiognomist. Looking up at his visitor, he felt sure that, however abrupt the words might sound, no offence was intended, and so, with a smile, he answered respectfully.

"I do not work on a Sunday, sir; but

hope it does not follow, as a necessary consequence, that I am wanting in respect to my employers."

"Yes, it does, man; at least, so my friend Harcourt says. He gives you but a bad character."

"I am sorry for it, sir," began Benson; but his visitor cut him short,

"Actually refused his order, and told him you would not do his work; do not you call that impertinence?"

"I had no choice, sir."

"Yes, you had. You were free to choose between serving God and pleasing man, and you made your choice; and it is in consequence of that determination that I am here to-day. I am General Downing. I have been looking out for some time past for a man on whom I could fully rely to execute a large Government order. The moment I heard Mr. Harcourt's story of you, I made up my mind you should have the work if you could take it; for I felt sure that the man who could serve God so fearlessly, would be the man who would best do his duty by his neighbour."

And as the General proceeded to detail to Benson the nature of the order he proposed to give him, Benson saw in a moment that such a prospect of well-doing was opened to him as he had never yet had since he went into business. Nor was he mistaken—that order laid the foundation of Benson's present prosperity. People envy him his good luck, but he knows better than to call his altered fortunes by that name; and as he looks on the future with the consciousness that, if all goes well, provision is now made for his old age, he thankfully acknowledges from whose hand the blessing comes, and that he has made experience for himself of the truth of the old proverb, "He that serves God serves a good master."

And so will it ever be, though it may not be always shown to us, as in the cases of Lennox and Benson, by the increase of worldly prosperity. A man would make a great mistake who followed their example only in the hope of gaining a like reward. He could take no more certain way of defeating his own intentions. If a man determines to serve God for the sake of bettering his earthly prospects, he is not serving God at all; he is only serving himself and his own interests. Let

not such a man deceive himself. God is not mocked. He who reads the inmost thoughts of the heart, will laugh to scorn this pitiful imitation of godliness.

But let a man make up his mind bravely and honestly to seek first the kingdom of God, not counting the price he must pay for it, content to forego present prospects of gain and worldly success, so long only as he may win heaven; this man will, for the most part, find that even in this world he has made a wise choice. God not only can, but does, make up to His servants for all they have given up for His sake, and hardly an instance could be pointed out of a man who has sincerely obeyed God's commands, regardless of the consequences that might ensue to himself, but sooner or later the sacrifice has come home in blessing, and he has found his loss repaid ten, thirty, ay, and a hundred-fold. If, indeed, a man has not found it so, let him look to himself, and examine his own heart, sure that the fault is with him, and not with his Maker. Let him look and see whether there has not been some lurking thought of self, which has entered into his motives, destroying, like a subtle poison, the healthfulness of his deed. Let him remember that he who serves self, serves a hard task-master—one whose wants are unbounded, and whose service is perfect slavery; whilst he who, turning a deaf ear to his own inclinations, writes himself the Lord's servant will find occasion to acknowledge, in time and through eternity, that "He who serves God serves a good Master."—*Household Proverbs.*

#### A SUGGESTION ABOUT PRAYER.

It is not by the short and transient applications to the throne of grace, which we are too apt to dignify with the name of prayer, that we can hope to be qualified for seasons of peculiar trial or temptation. This can alone be done by dwelling near the mercy seat; by sitting, as it were, upon the footstool of the throne; by daily, hourly, constantly sending forth those winged messengers of the heart—the secret, silent, swiftly flying thoughts which, while they form, like the Patriarch's ladder, an uninterrupted line of ascending entreaties to the Most High, form also a channel for his descending mercies to our souls.—*Bunyan.*

## A BLAST OF THE TRUMPET AGAINST FALSE PEACE.

BY REV. C. H. SPURGEON, LONDON.

(Concluded from page 397.)

4. A fourth set of men have a kind of peace that is the result of resolutions which they will never carry into effect. "Oh," saith one, "I am quite easy enough in my mind, for when I have got a little more money I shall retire from business, and then I shall begin to think about eternal things." Ah, but I would remind you that when you were an apprentice, you said you would reform when you became a journeyman; and when you were a journeyman, you used to say you would give good heed when you became a master. But hitherto these bills have never been paid when they became due. They have every one of them been dishonoured as yet; and take my word for it, this new accommodation bill will be dishonoured too. So you think to stifle conscience by what you will do by-and-bye. Ah, man, but will that by-and-bye ever come? And should it come, what reason is there to expect that you will then be any more ready than you are now. Hearts grow harder, sin grows stronger, vice becomes more deeply rooted by the lapse of years. You will find it certainly no easier to turn to God than now. *Now* it is impossible to you, apart from divine grace; *then* it shall be quite as impossible, and if I might say so, there shall be more difficulties in the way *then* than *even* there are *now*. What think you is the value of these promises which you have made in the court of heaven? Will God take your word again, and again, and again, when you have broken it just as often as you have given it? Not long ago you were lying on your bed with fever, and if you lived you vowed you would repent. Have you repented? And yet you are foolish enough to believe that you will repent by-and-bye; and on the strength of this promise, which is not worth a single straw, you are crying to yourself "peace, peace, when there is no peace." A man that waits for a more convenient season for thinking about the affairs of his soul, is like the countryman in Esop's fable, who sat down by a flowing river, saying, "If this stream con-

tinues to flow as it does now for a little while it will empty itself, and then I shall walk over dry-shod." Ah, but the stream was just as deep when he had waited day after day as it was before. And so shall it be with you. You remind me by your procrastination of the ludicrous position of a man who should sit upon a lofty branch of some tree with a saw in his hand, cutting away the branch on which he was sitting. This is what you are doing. Your delay is cutting away your branch of life. No doubt you intend to cover the well when the child is drowned, and to lock the stable door after the horse is stolen. These birds in the hand you are losing, because their may be some better hour, some better bird in the bush. You are thus getting a little quiet, but oh, at what a fatal cost! Paul was troublesome to you, and so you played the part of Felix, and said, "Go thy way for this time, when I have a more convenient season I will send for thee." Conscience was unquiet, so you stopped his mouth with this sop for Cerberus; and you have gone to your bed with this lie under your pillow, with this falsehood in your right hand—that you will be better by-and-bye. Ah, sir, let me tell you once for all, you live to grow worse and worse. While you are procrastinating, time is not yet staying nor is Satan resting. While you are saying, "Let things abide," things are not abiding, but they are hastening on. You are ripening for the dread harvest; the sickle is being sharpened that shall cut you down, and the fire is even now blazing into which your spirit shall be cast for ever.

5. Now I turn to another class of men, in order that I may miss none here who are saying "Peace, peace, when there is no peace." I do not doubt but that many of the people of London enjoy peace in their hearts, because they are ignorant of the things of God. It would positively alarm many of our sober orthodox Christians, if they could once have an idea of the utter ignorance of spiritual things that reigns throughout this land. Some of us when moving about here and there in all classes of society, have often been led to remark, that there is less known of the truths of religion than of any science, however recon-dite that science may be. Take a lamentable instance, the ordinary effusions of the secular press, and who can avoid remark-

ing the ignorance they manifest as to true religion. Let the papers speak on politics, it is a matter they understand, and their ability is astonishing; but, once let them touch religion and our Sabbath-school children could convict them of entire ignorance. The statements they put forth are so crude, so remote from the fact, that we are led to imagine that the presentation of a fourpenny testament to special correspondents, should be one of the first efforts of our societies for spreading the gospel among the heathen. As to theology, some of our great writers seem to be as little versed in it as a horse or a cow. Go among all ranks and classes of men, and since the day we gave up our catechism, and old Dr. Watts' and the Assemblies ceased to be used, people have not a clear idea of what is meant by the gospel of Christ. I have frequently heard it asserted, by those who have judged the modern pulpit without severity, that if a man attended a course of thirteen lectures on geology, he would get a pretty clear idea of the system, but that you might hear not merely thirteen sermons, but thirteen hundred sermons and you would not have a clear idea of the system of divinity that was meant to be taught. I believe that to a large extent that has been true. But the great change which has passed over the pulpit within the last two years, is a cause of the greatest thankfulness to God; and we believe will be a boon to the church and to the world at large. Ministers do preach more boldly than they did. There is more evangelical doctrine I believe preached in London now, in any one Sunday, than there was in a month before. But still there is in many quarters a profound ignorance as to the things of Christ. Our old Puritans—what masters they were in divinity! They knew the difference between the old covenant and the new; they did not mingle works and grace together. They penetrated into the recesses of gospel truth; they were always studying the Scriptures, and meditating on them both by day and night, and they shed a light upon the villages in which they preached, until they might have found in those days as profound theologians working upon stone heaps, as you can find in colleges and universities now a days. How few discern the spirituality of the law, the glory of the atonement, the perfection of justification,

the beauty of mortification, and the preciousness of real union to Christ. I do not marvel that we have a multitude of men who are mere professors and mere formalists, who are nevertheless quite as comfortable in their minds as though they were possessors of vital godliness, and really walked in the true fear of God.

There was not—I speak of things that were—there was not in the pulpit a little while ago, a discernment between things that differ; there was not a separating between the precious and the vile. The grand cardinal points of the Gospel, if not denied, were ignored. We began to think that the thinkers would overwhelm the believers, that intellectuality and philosophy would overthrow the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ. It is not so now; I do therefore, hope, that as the gospel shall be more fully preached, that as the words of Jesus shall be better understood, that as the things of the kingdom of heaven shall be set in a clearer light, this stronghold of a false peace, namely, ignorance of Gospel doctrines, shall be battered to its foundations, and the foundation-stones themselves dug up and cast away for ever. If you have a peace that is grounded on ignorance, get rid of it; ignorance is a thing, remember, that you are accountable for. You are not accountable for the exercise of your judgment to man, but you are accountable for it to God. There is no such thing as toleration of your sentiments with Jehovah; I have no right to judge you; I am your fellow-creature. No State has any right to dictate what religion I shall believe; but nevertheless, there is a true gospel, and there are thousands of false ones. God has given you judgment, use it. Search the Scriptures, and remember that if you neglect this Word of God, and remain ignorant, your sins of ignorance will be sins of wilful ignorance, and therefore ignorance shall be no excuse. There is the Bible, you have it in your houses; you can read it. God the Holy Spirit will instruct you in its meaning; and if you remain ignorant charge it no more on the minister; charge it on no one but yourself, and make it no cloak for your sin.

6. I now pass to another and more dangerous form of this false peace. I may have missed some of you, probably; I shall come closer home to you now. Alas, alas,

let us weep and weep again, for there is a plague among us. There are members of our churches who are saying, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace." It is the part of candour to admit that with all the exercise of judgment, and the most rigorous discipline, we cannot keep our churches free from hypocrisy. I have had to hear, to the very breaking of my heart, stories of men and women who have believed the doctrines of election, and other truths of the gospel, and have made them a sort of cover for the most frightful iniquity. I could, without uncharitableness, point to churches that are hot-beds of hypocrisy, because men are taught that it is the belief of a certain set of sentiments that will save them, and not warned that this is all in vain without a real living faith in Christ. The preacher does as good as say, if not in so many words: "If you are orthodox, if you believe what I tell you, you are saved; if you for a moment turn aside from that line which I have chalked out for you, I cannot be accountable for you; but if you will give me your whole heart, and believe precisely what I say, whether it is Scripture or not; then you are a saved man." And we know persons of that cast, who can have their shop open on a Sunday, and then go to enjoy what they call a savoury sermon in the evening; men who mix up with drunkards, and yet say they are God's elect; men who live as others live, and yet they come before you, and with brazen impudence, tell you that they are redeemed by the blood of Christ. It is true they have had a deep experience, as they say. God save us from such a muddy experience as that! They have had, they say, a great manifestation of the depravity of their hearts, but still they are the precious children of God. Precious, indeed! Dear at any price that any man should give for them. If they be precious to any one here below, they are not of the slightest use to either religion or morality. Oh! I do not know of a more thoroughly damnable delusion than for a man to get a conceit into his head, that he is a child of God, and yet live in sin—to talk to you about sovereign grace, while he is living in sovereign lust—to stand up and make himself the arbitrator of what is truth, while he himself contemns the precept of God, and tramples the commandment under foot.

Hard as Paul was on such men in his time—when he said their damnation is just—he spoke a most righteous sentence. Surely, the devil gloats over men of this kind. A Calvinist I am, but John Calvin never taught immoral doctrine. A more consistent expositor of Scripture than that great reformer I believe never lived, but his doctrine is not the Hyper-Calvinism of these modern times, but is as diametrically opposed to it as light to darkness. There is not a word in any one of his writings that would justify any man in going on in iniquity that grace might abound. If you do not hate sin, it is all the same what doctrine you may believe. You may go to perdition as rapidly with High-Calvinistic doctrine as with any other. You are just as surely destroyed in an orthodox as in a heterodox church unless your life manifests that you have been "begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

7. I have but one other class of persons to describe, and then I shall have done when I have addressed a few solemn sentences of warning to you all. There remains yet another class of beings who surpass all these in their utter indifference to everything that might arouse them. They are men that are given up by God, justly given up. They have passed the boundary of his long-suffering. He has said, "My spirit shall no more strive with them;" "Ephraim is given unto idols, let him alone." As a judicial punishment for their impenitence, God has given them up to pride and hardness of heart. I will not say that there is such an one here—God grant there may not be such a man—but there have been such to whom there has been given a strong delusion, that they might believe a lie, that they might be damned because they received not the gospel of Christ. Brought up by a holy mother, they perhaps learned the gospel when they were almost in the cradle—Trained by the example of a holy father, they went aside to wantonness, and brought a mother's gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. Nevertheless, conscience still pursued them. At the funeral of that mother, the young man paused and asked himself the question, "Have I killed her? have I brought her here?" He went home, was sober for a day, was tempted by a cou-

panion, and became as bad as ever. Another warning came. He was seized with madness; he lay in the jaws of the grave; he woke up; he lived, and lived as vilely as he had lived before. Often did he hear his mother's voice—though she was in the grave, she being dead yet spoke to him. He put the Bible on the top shelf—hid it away; still, sometimes a text he had learned in infancy used to thrust itself on his mind. One night as he was going to some haunt of vice, something arrested him, conscience seemed to say to him, "Remember all that you have learned of her." He stood still, bit his lip a moment, considered, weighed chances. At last he said, "I will go if I am lost." He went, and from that moment it has often been a source of wonder to him that he has never thought of his mother nor of the Bible. He hears a sermon, which he does not heed. It is all the same to him. He is never troubled. He says, "I don't know how it is; I am glad of it; I am as easy now and as frolicksome as ever a young fellow could be." Oh! I tremble to explain this quietude; but it may be—God grant I may not be a true prophet—it may be that God has thrown the reins on his neck, and said, "Let him go, let him go, I will warn him no more; he shall be filled with his own ways; he shall go the length of his chain; I will never stop him." Mark! if it be so, your damnation is as sure as if you were in the pit now. O may God grant that I may not have such a hearer here. But that dread thought may well make you search yourselves, for it may be so. There is that possibility; search and look, and God grant that you may no more say, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace."

Now for these last few solemn words. I will not be guilty this morning, of speaking any smooth falsehoods to you, I would be faithful with each man, as I believe I shall have to face you all at God's great day, even though you heard me but once in your life. Well, then, let me tell you that if you have a peace to-day which enables you to be at peace with your sins as well as with God, that peace is a false peace. Unless you hate sin of every sort, with all your heart, you are not a child of God, you are not reconciled to God by the death of his Son. You will not be perfect; I cannot expect you will live without sin; but

if you are a Christian you will hate the very sin into which you have been betrayed, and hate sin because you should have grieved your Saviour thus. But if you love sin, the love of the Father is not in you. Be you who you may, or what you may,—minister, deacon, elder, professor, or non-professor—the love of sin is utterly inconsistent with the love of Christ. Take that home, and remember it.

Another solemn thought. If you are at peace to-day through a belief that you are righteous in yourself, you are not at peace with God. If you are wrapping yourself up in your own righteousness and saying, "I am as good as other people, I have kept God's law, and have no need for mercy," you are not at peace with God. You are treasuring up in your impenitent heart wrath against the day of wrath; and you will as surely be lost if you trust to your good works, as if you had trusted to your sins. There is a clean path to hell as well as a dirty one. There is as sure a road to perdition along the highway of morality, as down the slough of vice. Take heed that you build on nothing else but Christ; for if you do, your house will tumble about your ears, when most you need its protection.

And, yet again, my hearer, if thou art out of Christ there is no true peace to the conscience, and no reconciliation to God. Ask thyself this question, "Do I believe on the Lord Jesus Christ with all my heart? Is he my only trust, the simple, solitary rock of my refuge?" For if not, as the Lord my God liveth, before whom I stand, thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bonds of iniquity, and dying as thou art, out of Christ, thou wilt be shut out of heaven; where God and bliss are found, thy soul can never come.

And now, finally, let me beseech you, if you are at peace in your own mind this morning, weigh your peace thus: "Will my peace stand me on a sickbed?" There are many that are peaceful enough when they are well, but when their bones begin to ache, and their flesh is sore vexed, then they find they want something more substantial than this dreamy quietness into which their souls had fallen. If a little sickness makes you shake, if the thought that your heart is affected, or that you may drop down dead in a fit on a sudden—

that startles you, then put that question of Jeremy to yourself, "If thou hast run with the footmen and they have wearied thee, what wilt thou do in the swellings of Jordan? If sickness make thee shake what will destruction make thee do? Then again, put the question in another light. If your peace is good for anything, it is one that will bear you up in a dying hour. Are you ready to go home to your bed now to lie there and never rise again? For remember, that which will not stand a dying bed will never stand the day of judgment. If my hope begins to quiver, even when the skeleton hand of Death begins to touch me, how will it shake, "When God's right arm is nerved for war, and thunders clothe his cloudy car?" If death makes me startle, what will the glory of God do? How shall I shrink into nothing, and fly away from him in despair! Then often put to thyself this question, "Will my peace last me when the heavens are in a blaze, and when the trembling universe stands to be judged?"

Oh my dear hearers, I know I have spoken feebly to you this morning; not as I could have wished, but I do entreat you, if what I have said be not an idle dream, if it be not a mere myth of my imagination; if it be true, lay it to heart, and may God enable you to prepare to meet him. Do not be wrapping yourselves up, and slumbering, and sleeping. Awake, ye sleepers, awake! Oh! that I had a trumpet voice to warn you. Oh! while you are dying, while you are sinking into perdition, may I not cry to you; may not these eyes weep for you! I cannot be extravagant here; I am acquitted of being enthusiastic or fanatical on such a matter as this. Take to heart, I beseech you, the realities of eternity. Do not for ever waste your time. "O, turn ye, turn ye; why will ye die, O house of Israel." Listen, now, to the word of the Gospel, which is sent to you. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and ye shall be saved." For "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," while the solemn sentence remains, "He that believeth not shall be damned."

Too much wealth is often the occasion of poverty. He that thinks he can afford to be negligent is not far from being poor.

## OBTAINING PROMISES.

1. Child of God, babe in grace, wouldst thou obtain the promises? Take this advice first—*meditate much upon them*.—There are promises which are like grapes in the wine-press; if thou wilt tread them the juice will flow. Many a time a believer, when he is like Isaac walking in the fields, meditating in the cool of the day upon a promise, unexpectedly meets his Rebekah, the blessing which had tarried long, comes on a sudden home. He sought retirement to meditate upon a promise, and lo! "being in the way, God met with him." Thinking over the hallowed words will often be the means of fulfilling them. "I was in the spirit on the Lord's day," saith John, "and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet." Just so. It was his being in the Spirit, his meditating upon spiritual things, that made him ready to behold the King in his beauty, and to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. Specially, young christian, meditate upon these promises which relate personally to Christ. While you are thinking them over, the faith which you are seeking will insensibly come to you. That word which saith, "the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin"—think that over, masticate and digest it, and in the very act of meditation, faith will be born in your soul. Many a man who has thirsted for the promise while he has been considering the divine record, has found the favor which it ensured, gently distilling into his soul, and he has rejoiced that ever he was led to lay the promise near his heart. I think it is Martin Luther who says that some passages of Scripture are like trees which bear fruit, but the fruit does not easily drop. You must get hold of the tree, saith he, shake it, and shake it again, and again, and sometimes you will need to exhaust all your strength, but at the last shake, down drops the delicious fruit. So do you with the promise, shake it to and fro by meditation, and the apples of gold will fall. Let the promise, like the problem of the philosopher, be revolved in your soul, and at last your spirit shall leap for very joy while you say, "I have found it, I have found it, the very thing that my soul hath sought after."

2. Secondly, young man in Christ Jesus

do not only meditate upon the promise, but seek in thy soul to realize it as being the very word of God. Say to thy soul thus: "If I were dealing with a man's promise I should look most carefully at the man who covenanted with me. If I had a bond or note of hand, I should estimate most carefully the credibility, the respectability, and solvency of the man whose name was endorsed thereon. So with the promise of God: my eye must not be so much fixed upon the greatness of the mercy—that may stagger me; as upon the greatness of the promiser—that will cheer me. My soul, it is God, even thy God, God that cannot lie who speaks to thee. This word of his which thou art now considering is as true as his own existence. He is a God unchangeable, and therefore this promise has not been revoked. He has not altered the thing which has gone out of his mouth, nor called back one single consolatory sentence. Nor doth he lack any power; it is the God that made the heavens and the earth, who hath spoken to me and said, "Thus and thus will I do." Nor will he, nor can he, fail in wisdom as to the time when he will bestow the favors, for he knoweth when best to give and when better to withhold. Therefore, seeing that it is the word of a God so true, so immutable, so powerful, so wise, I will and must believe the promise. See, my brethren, you have already arrived at the faith which obtains the promise. I think we ought to be ashamed of ourselves, every one of us, that we dared to doubt God. Thinking this over the other day a horror of great darkness fell upon my soul, while I mourned that ever I should have been guilty of the infamous blasphemy of doubting God. To doubt an honest man is to cast a slur upon him; but to doubt God who cannot lie; to doubt God who by an oath has sworn—what is this but to make God a liar, or even a perjurer! Our soul shrinks back from infamy so accursed. Did ever fiend in hell commit a more detestable iniquity than that of doubting the veracity of a God of perfection and truth? Come, soul, there is the promise; there it stands before thee. Thou sayest, "I dare not believe it;" but I say, "How darcest thou doubt it? where didst thou get thy arrogance from? how canst thou speak so exceeding proudly as thus to think of God and say-of

him, that he has promised what he cannot or what he will not perform!" Lay much to heart, then, young christian, the fact that the promise, is the very word of God, and surely thou wilt not find it hard to believe, and so to obtain the promise.

3. Then, in the third place, be sure that thou doest, in the power of the Spirit of God, what the precept annexed to the promise asks of thee. Follow the example of Moses. Moses knew that there was a promise given to the people of Israel, that they should be the world's blessing; but in order to obtain it, it was necessary that Moses should practise self-denial. What did he? He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, counting it better to suffer the reproach of Christ than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season. If the promise commands thee to deny thyself, thou canst not obtain it without doing so. Do it, and thou hast obtained it. Or, suppose that the promise requires at thy hand courage—use courage. David felt he had a promise from God that he would keep him. He knew that in his past experience God had been faithful. "Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them." He advanced to the conflict and the Lord was his deliverer. Go thou forth with thy sling and thy stone, for thou wilt never obtain the promise if thou art afraid to face thy gigantic foe. Or does the promise require obedience at thy hand! Be obedient. Remember how Rahab, the harlot, hung out from her window the scarlet line, because that was the test of her faith. So do thou. Whatsoever Christ hath said unto thee do it. Neglect no command, however trivial it may seem.—What if it be non-essential! what hast thou to do with that? Do what thy Master tells thee, asking no questions for he is an ill-servant who questions his Lord's commands. Doubtless, thou too, like the Ethiopian eunuch, shalt go on thy way rejoicing when thou hast been obedient. Or is the promise made to those who bear a good report of the land? Remember who Caleb and Joshua were, the only two who obtained the promise out of all the host that came out of Egypt, because they alone, "faithful among the faithless found," honored God, and would not dare to distrust him. So do thou honor God. Let

a scoffing world bear thine unvarying testimony that thy God is good and true.— Let not thy wretched face whisper to men that thou hast a hard master. Let not thy groanings and thy murmurings make young men suspect that God is tyrannical to his own children, and that they have no joys, no comforts, no delights. Be not as the hypocrites are, of a sad countenance; bow not thy head like a bulrush, afflict not thy soul, for this is not the service which God demandeth of thee. Better the palm branch than the willow, fairer the wedding garment than the mourner's weeds. He whom we serve is no Egyptian task-master—his yoke is easy, his service pleasure, his reward unspeakable. "Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say rejoice." Be not cast down and troubled, as though the child of God had a cruel parent, and a miserable home; but lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh, and to the timbrel and the harp, march ye on, to the promised inheritance of the people of God. So shall you by joy of heart, not bringing up an evil report of the land, inherit the promise.—*Spurgeon.*

### I HOPE TO BE A CHRISTIAN.

You do! Why, then, do you not seek to be a Christian? "Ask and ye shall receive: seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you." "Ye shall seek for me and find me, when ye search for me with all your heart?" Are you seeking for God with all your heart? No man ever yet escaped from the thralldom of sin and Satan who did not earnestly struggle to be free; no man ever entered the strait gate who did not agonize to accomplish that glorious end. Carelessness and inattention afford no foundation for a hope that you are to become a child of God.

You hope to be a Christian! Why, then, do you not give up your sins, renounce the world as your portion, and cheerfully surrender yourself to Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life? He is ready and willing to receive you. He gave his life a ransom for sinners; he freely gives his Spirit to those who earnestly ask him; he has filled his revealed word with invitations and encouragements to those who desire his grace; he has long been knocking at

the door of your heart for admission.— How, then, can you hope to be a Christian?

You hope to be a Christian! When?— Not now. You are too busy, or have something in view which must first be accomplished, or are so indisposed to give yourself to the work, that this is not felt to be the "convenient season." After a while, when you have accumulated a fortune, or passed the period when you can partake in the world's pleasures, or when there is a revival of religion, or at farthest on a dying bed, you hope to be a Christian. But God's commands and promises are for the present. He gives no encouragement to wait for a future season. You have no assurance that there shall be any season beyond the present. Before the anticipated time comes you may be in eternity.

You hope to be a Christian! So multitudes of others like yourself, who were living in sin, have hoped; but where are they now? Long ago have they been cut down as cumberers of the ground. Their day of grace and day of life have closed. They lived without Christ, and they died without him; they trifled away their precious time on earth, in the delusive hope that some day or other they would be Christians. That day never came to them, and never will come. "Their harvest is past, the summer is ended," and their souls are not saved.

### CIRCULATE RELIGIOUS PAPERS.

That religious newspapers are instruments of good, all acknowledge—but of how great good few appreciate. We know a venerable Christian, now laid by on the account of the infirmity of years, who spent the last active years of his life, in circulating religious newspapers. Besides his own paper he procured those of his neighbours, and took them to persons unable or indisposed to become regular subscribers. He was so fully convinced of the importance of this means of usefulness that he spent years in the work—a mission at once simple and every way economical. Religious newspapers often carry truths to households that are barred against religious books—to hearts that are closed to religious truths.—*Mirror.*

# THE GOOD NEWS.

AUGUST 15th, 1862.

## COAST MISSIONS :

A Memoir of Rev. Thomas Rosie,  
by Rev. James Dodds, Dunbar.

BY MRS. LUNDIE DUNCAN, KELSO, SCOTLAND.

As the melted snow unites with the spring at the summit of the mountain, so does the cold heart of man that is selfish, become thawed by the spring of the Holy Spirit, till presently it flows down. First, the rill, then the stream, then the river to add its waters to the swelling ocean, which finally sends up its contributions to the clouds, as the once selfish heart overflows to its fellow-man, and from man, up to the blessed Spirit that first thawed it, and taught it the joy of sympathy and the happiness of usefulness.

The idea of the spring at the mountain top, and the flowing stream, haunts the fancy in considering the rise of all the Christian exertions which owe their existence to the last half century—and in none more than in the origin and progress of Home and City Missions. It seemed curious to the writer, that, in reading of Thomas Rosie, the thought of David Naemyth (raised as the spring of a great work, and cut down when he had scarcely seen it flow onward with a promise of success), should have run on a parallel to Rosie's; and then in turning back to the preface, which the author designed to have read first, to find that he had also found and enjoyed the same resemblance.

Naemyth, aroused by the alarm of Chalmers, and by the sights of neglect and destitution which Glasgow set before him, left all, that he might awaken the world's philanthropists to the necessity of City Missions. He was cut off, but his works have largely followed him.

Rosie, cradled in Ronaldshay, one of the

storm-swept Orcades, was from childhood familiar with the sea and sailors. By his skill in boats, his custom of observing old Ocean in all its moods, and his knowledge of fishermen, sailors and their habits, he was trained from infancy, by Him who knoweth the end from the beginning, for the scene of usefulness which was in due time appointed for him.

At the age of fifteen, having acquired all that his parish school could teach him, but never having enlarged his mind by diverging from his little island, or by any extensive reading while in it, he left South Ronaldshay, and, with his family, removed to Edinburgh. There he entered into business and found favour in the eyes of a Christian master; and there he met his first affliction in the removal by death of his faithful and consistent father. Rosie is not the first who, by such an event, has been called on to perform the duties of family worship, and has been led by that performance to search his heart, and to discover that saying words on the knees is not necessarily prayer.

This discovery led to praying in earnest, to Bible searching, and attendance on the means of grace. "These true signs of awakening were watched by his anxious and prayerful mother, with the deepest interest and joy. That mother, again travelling in birth for her son, rejoiced greatly to see him at once rising into intellectual manhood, and becoming a little child in Christ Jesus." \*

That vital change which fitted the man for his earthly employment, and helped to prepare him for a holier and happier dwelling-place, is simply and touchingly described by himself in a letter to a friend.—

"Up to the time of my father's death, though I was obliged to keep up the outward performance of duty, there was in my heart a great dislike to all that is good. My mind was set on folly, on the pleasures

and profits of the world. I was quite sensible I was doing wrong; but I always resolved to put off a little longer my turning to God. Yet the conviction of sin and danger became stronger and stronger, and the question forced itself on my mind, 'What shall I do to be saved?' Many a long day and night did this question recur, and all the while I knew the answer, but *did not understand it*. For a considerable time, I thought the way of coming to the Saviour was by giving up my sins, and living in the practice of every duty, and then God would accept me. I tried this way, but found I *could not succeed*. I never could arrive at that state which I thought God would be inclined to look on with favour. During all this time, I never once really prayed to God. At length one day feeling much alarmed lest I should die in my present state, the thought struck me that I should pray to God. I immediately went into my room and knelt to pray; but I could not utter a word. I wept bitterly, and rose from my knees, not feeling any better; but these words, 'What shall I do to be saved?' were ever present to my mind. One summer morning I rose early and went to Salisbury Crags. When musing on my state and the question that was never out of my thoughts, it came into my mind that I should again attempt to pray. I knelt down beside a rock and prayed to God to teach me what I should do to be saved. At that moment God let me see that all I should do was *just to come to Jesus as I was*. I felt that if I waited till I was better, I would never come at all. I now felt that I had got the light I needed, and found the true answer to the great question, 'What shall I do to be saved?' I began also to feel the value of prayer, of God's Word, and of his ordinances. I went home quite happy, feeling that if death were to come, I should not be afraid to die; and from that hour the desire arose in my mind to devote my-

self to the work of telling others the way to be saved. I felt also, that if a way were opened up for my being engaged in that work, I should be willing to go to any quarter of the world."\*

Here then was the thawing of the ice of selfishness, and the salutary influence of that pure spring that extinguished the mind set on the pleasures and profits of the world, and kindled the desire to lead other souls to the gracious Saviour. By this he was turned from business to study, and thus in a few years, after having been made the instrument of winning several souls in his Sabbath class, and after many visits to sailors at Leith and to the fishing villages around, he was by providence prepared to answer an advertisement for a Coast Missionary, whose work was to be chiefly among fishermen and sailors. This was an office hitherto unknown in the land, even by name, though now extending around our shores, and occupied by many worthy names, of which Thomas Rosie's was the first.

And here again we see the feeble spring touched by the divine hand, flowing on ward till it becomes a river to water and refresh the land. A quiet, prayerful woman in Dunbar, wife of a retired Navy Lieutenant, has the welfare of fishermen and sailors ever on her heart, till it gives a tone to her whole life. From her exertions in a Christian circle arises the Society that seeks for a Missionary who is to exercise his calling among ships, boats and cottages, from Dunbar to Berwick-on-Tweed. The sale of Bibles and good books, the distribution of tracts and the use of lending libraries, with all the meetings for prayer, exhortations in private or in school-rooms, visits to the sick—in short, all the apparatus that zeal and love have suggested to the Missionary, were quickly put in action, with the hearty concurrence of most of the pas-

\* Memoir, pages 13, 14.

rors, and under the guidance of the Committee at Dunbar. In his journals we find visits to foreign fishing-boats with greedily accepted tracts in their own tongue, visits to mourners whose swamped boats have made some widows and fatherless; visits to ships, and sales of Bibles—to some who cannot read, and to some who will not. In short, proofs abundant that a Coast Missionary is no superfluous assistant.

Along the coast where Mr. Rosie past his first prayerful and laborious year, a spirit of revival has since passed, and many of those who were a trial to him, have now been quickened into new life.

We cannot prolong the history to tell of his leaving his favourite work for a time to study for the ministry; but always one great idea was in his mind, that of extending the Coast Mission all around Scotland, so as to provide for the wants of the men of the sea; and so we find him in 1855, with his business habits, and skill in organization, and his unwearied zeal, holding a meeting in Glasgow to establish a West Coast Mission, which flourishes to this day, from Port-Glasgow to Stranraer, and from the Clyde to the Solway.

With Rosie originated the idea of a yacht manned by three Christian seamen, himself being one of them, that could thread all the intricacies of the west, visit every island, and leave no coble or boat unsupplied with the Holy Scriptures and tracts. The notion took at once in the west. Rosie raised the fund, in which he was munificently sustained by Mr. Henderson of Park. He bought and furnished the yacht, and in August, 1856, the new era in mission work arrived, when the little craft with her compliment of men, Gaelic and English, and her Bethel flag, sailed down the Clyde. In May, 1857, we find a journal of a visit to the Coast and Islands, from which we cannot refrain from giving an extract, which gives a true picture of the man, his labours, and the element on which they were pro-

secuted. At Kyleakin, while waiting for a tide, he visited its 800 inhabitants from house to house, and then preached to them in the open air. This was on Saturday evening.

“Started on Monday, June 29, for Stornoway. A smart breeze—as much as we could do to carry full sail. When outside the bay, could lie close-hauled a point and half to windward of Stornoway. In the Minch, encountered a heavy sea, every pitch laying the jib-boom under water. Repeatedly, large billows might be seen ahead and on either side, rolling and foaming. All the worst of these we fortunately escaped except one, on the one side of which our gallant little bark leaped as though she would stand right over end; and then on the other, plunged into it; so that the whole fore part of the vessel was buried in the water. So violent was the shock, that while sitting steering, I was lifted from the seat and thrown forward on the deck. In a moment I caught the helm again, all was right, and on we went. The wind increased, and we were obliged to shorten sail. Instead of getting to Stornoway, we were driven about twenty miles from it, and taking the first shelter we could, found our way into Loch Valumis. At the head of that lonely creek, we came to anchor at two in the morning, ready for refreshment and repose, not having tasted food from two the previous day. Having enjoyed a good tea, we gathered around the family altar, and thanked and praised Him who has said, ‘When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee.’ Retired to rest, and enjoyed it as those generally do who toil the hardest. The morning came and the sun shed his lustre around.”\*

Once again, the faithful man reached his islet of Ronaldshay, that he had left seventeen years before, a careless boy, and there his Mission and himself found a cordial

welcome. Then holding meetings at Inverness and Aberdeen, they sailed down the coast, and after many calls, paused at what had been the spot of his first work at Dunbar, seven years before. Thus having nearly encircled Scotland's shores, he closed his labours in the meantime, as he must resume his studies under the United Presbyterian Professor in Edinburgh; but he never laid aside his plans for the Coast Mission, as the following zealous and hopeful project will shew.

"A vessel of some kind is indispensable for the efficient working of the Mission among the islands. To this I can now get hundreds to testify. Now I have a grand plan in my head, that is, to get a screw-steamer instead of a sailing vessel, to have four of a crew, besides myself. I feel myself able to take charge of her, and thus save the expense of a captain; while I would have four chosen men always on board as Missionaries, to labour daily in every nook and corner of these islands, the steamer their conveyance and lodging. I dare say it will take about £1000 to get such a vessel; but we can easily raise that out of Scotland. It will take about £700 per annum to support it; but that is not much for the work that would be done." \*

Before this session of study was completed, a proposal was made, which, though it did not alter his pursuits, carried its exercise to a distant and untried climate. He accepted a proposal to settle at Bombay as Harbour Missionary, provided he might first finish his studies in the Divinity Hall; and it was agreed that he should, before going out, be ordained as a Missionary for India. Quickly his active mind saw visions of Missions extending all around the Indian Peninsula, and cheering the British haunts of commerce. Such visions, however, rather invigorated than slackened his exertions in his last season at home. So, after a suspension of four months from any labour,

occasioned by the first ill health he had ever experienced, we find him toiling from town to town, and from village to village, establishing the North-East Coast Mission; and thus the spring which had welled forth in Dunbar in 1851, in the work of a single man, had, under his unwearied skill in organizing and stimulating, spread around the land, and in 1853 Rosie left behind him upwards of thirty well chosen labourers in full employment; and all around the East Coast, in the circuit of the labourers, the stream of revived religious concern has flowed, so that the good news of its flow had begun to cheer the heart of the zealous man on the new shores to which he had been removed. He read in the harbour of Bombay of the coast revival in Scotland with breathless joy; while we, in tracing the well-compacted and minute sketch of the holy man, cannot avoid entertaining the mournful feeling, that the time neared when his plans were to be broken off in their dawn; and it was the divine will that even now in his prime it should be said to him, "Friend, go up higher."

Mr. Rosie was cordially received in Bombay, and finally made his dwelling in the Mariner's Church, a large ship anchored in the middle of the harbour, the lower deck being the chapel, the middle his house, and the third deck or roof, covered with an awning. He daily visited the ships, conversing and distributing tracts—preached on Sabbath and Wednesday—saw the sick in hospital and the criminals in the house of correction, and planned for a course of lectures from October to May.

Comfortable as he was, cherished by the good men of Bombay, with his hands full of work, the social spirit still felt his floating dwelling lonely, and at last had his heart's wish accomplished in his union with Miss Leitch, who had been the active Secretary of the Ladies' Committee of the Scottish Coast Mission. They were of

\* Memoir, page 141.

one mind, and his prospects all looked bright. He not only occupied his sphere, but was filled with a grand scheme for sailors all around the globe.

"If more than 300,000 British sailors, and as many Americans, all speaking English, navigate every sea, and visit every part of the globe, all capable of exerting great influence for good or for evil, are in a measure left destitute of religious instruction, and anything like pastoral care, it is high time that the Churches on both sides of the Atlantic were organizing some means of reaching so large a class of men with appliances suited to their character and wants." \*

Harbour Missions may be the means of preparing the merchandise of great cities to spread holiness to the Lord. We must refer to the Memoir for Rosie's jottings of his expanded plan, and enter on that brief dismissal which terminated his earthly exertions.

Sickness, from over exertion in the hot climate, rendered a journey to the hills necessary. The last letter which Mr. Rosie seems to have written to his sisters, has this little expression of home interest, "I cannot tell how glad we are to hear of the revival at Newhaven, and to receive such cheering accounts of the North-east Coast Missions." He meant to write to the Directors of that mission "to rejoice with them;" but next mail day he had entered into his rest, and rejoiced with the saints and angels in glory.

When a servant of God enters his celestial abode, not only do the angels wait to bear him, but the mourners left below are interested to learn particulars of the farewell struggle. We are indebted to the heart-stricken widow for the closing scene. They had reached the healthy Mahabaleshwar hills, 5000 feet above the level of the sea, and restoration seemed at first promis-

ed; but disease and death were appointed victors over the house of clay, and the spirit was set free far from his native isle.

Mrs. Rosie says:—"Awaking from a slumber, he repeated with emphasis the words, 'He maketh intercession for us. He maketh intercession with groanings that cannot be uttered.' He then looked at me and said—"I am going home. My father is calling me, and I am quite ready." I could not speak, and he continued:—"Yes, I am quite ready. I have just a simple faith in Jesus, my Redeemer. It is just like a little child's—O, I shall soon see Him." Then lowering his voice, with increasing solemnity, with a grandeur and dignity of manner that quite overawed me, he said: "Do you know that glory is breaking upon me? Soon, soon unspeakable glories shall burst upon my vision, and I shall see my Redeemer." For some minutes he thus spoke in such a strain of rapture and holy triumph, descriptive of the glory of heaven and the blessedness that awaited him, that I was quite overpowered, and am still unable to recall much of what he said. When he paused, I said to him, "How mysterious it is that you should be called away so suddenly, and should leave me alone on this hill!" "Yes," he replied, "but *not alone*." "But I cannot," I said, "part with you so soon." With a look of surprise, and in a tone loud enough to be heard in the adjoining room, he rejoined, "O, when I am to be *for ever* with the Lord!" Then slowly, and as if bringing himself down to my state of mind, he repeated the words, "But I see it is the *separation* you are thinking of. Well, I am in Christ, and I have a good hope that you are in Christ; and we must meet; I am only going before you." Then gathering himself up with a triumphant expression that filled me with awe, he said, "Now then, kiss me in Jesus." Here I became unconscious for a few minutes, and the Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Deans, American Missionaries, entered the room. They were

\* Memoir, page 232.

unremitting in their kind attentions. Mr. D. asked the dear sufferer if Christ was precious to him. 'O yes,' he replied, 'very precious. I have been a great sinner; but I have found a great Saviour. Sixteen years ago, he sought me, and found me, and brought me to himself.' Mr. Dean offered prayer, after which he asked if any one else would pour out his heart before God; whereupon Mr. Martinnant prayed. After that Mr. Rosie evidently engaged in prayer himself, though in so low a tone that he could scarcely be heard. This was about ten in the forenoon.

"I asked him what message he had for his sisters; he sighed and said, 'This will be to them their greatest earthly trial; but just tell them what I have told you, and that I shall meet them again.' On any friend entering the room, he always commended me to their care. Mr. Dean he especially asked to see me taken care of till I reached Bombay, adding with much emphasis, 'There are kind friends in Bombay.'

"For some time he continued giving expression to his joy at the prospect of dying—of 'going home,' as he loved to call it. 'Oh! if this be dying,' he said, 'how easy it is to die.' Then turning to me he would say,—'You know that to me to die is great gain.' Closing his eyes he said, 'I wish to exist only for thy glory; Jesus, Jesus, take me to thyself.'

"After this, he was able to speak but little, and soon the restlessness of death was on him. At his request I read some portions of scripture and repeated hymns, to all of which he feelingly responded.—The hymn, 'I lay my sins on Jesus,' always a favourite, he listened to with special delight. When I began to repeat 'The hour of my departure's come,' he said, 'Ah, these were the dying words of my sainted mother, and I shall soon see her. Then his expression became so lighted up, that I could

not help speaking of it to him, but he only murmured forth such expressions as these, 'The Lamb of God—The sea of glass—The Lamb in the midst of the Throne.' Then I asked him if he could see me, he replied, 'Partially.' After that he put his hand, already cold, over my face, but it fell down powerless, and I heard the words, 'Dear, dear Maggie, farewell.'

"Still the work of dying continued, and I almost wished to see him released. To every question I put, he replied with a countenance radiant with joy, 'The Lamb of God, the Lamb of God.' He continued slowly sinking, yet perfectly conscious and acute. Seeing him uneasy, and not thinking death so near, I said, 'Is Jesus with you now, dearest?' with a great effort he said, 'Yes;' and after a few more breaths were drawn, the weary wheels of life at last stood still, and his spirit was with the Saviour. I heard some one near me exclaim, 'Victory! victory! He is the conqueror now.' I closed his eyes, and was taken away."

The palanquin and bearers that carried him up the Ghauts, bore his remains to rest in the English cemetery, beside those of Mr. Groves, an American missionary, and his widow has returned to her home.

His Master called, and his heart leapt up to heaven, but not till he has opened a door for mariners, which it is hoped will not close till "there be no more sea."

Thomas Rosie rests from his labours, but his works do follow him.

### A SOLEMN THOUGHT.

With its present yearly income, it will take the British and Foreign Bible Society more than 600 years to supply a copy of the Scriptures to each of the seven hundred millions of poor benighted heathen.

☞ The sum which is spent every year in Great Britain and Ireland for intoxicating drinks, would enable the Society to effect this object in one year!

"Doth God see?"

### "SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM."

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness."—Matt. vi. 33

The gate of that kingdom is "RIGHTEOUSNESS;" that is, you enter it, and get into citizenship therein by becoming *righteous*; and you become righteous by taking as your own the merit, the worthiness, the obedience, the satisfaction of the Righteous One.

Now, you are not asked to retire to a monastery—to give up present duties—to renounce your occupations. No! it is to those who are engaged with life's busy pursuits that Christ's call comes, "Seek first the kingdom;" which implies that you may certainly seek other things also in their place; you need not abandon your work and business; nay, you *must* not relinquish that calling wherein God places you; but, "Seek first the kingdom." Put the eternal kingdom and glory in their right place.

Are you seeking it "*first*," who are seeking it only once a week, only on a sabbath, only on a sickbed? Are you seeking it "*first*," who seek it easily, lazily, languidly?—you who give more time to the newspaper, and the gossip of a tea-table? Is this seeking it "*first*?"

Are you seeking it "*first*" whose souls' depths were never stirred by the thought of it?—you whose desires and hopes are always tending toward earth?

Are you seeking it "*first*," who are content without having found it; who sit down untroubled though the kingdom is not won? Are you giving it the chief place?

Are you seeking it "*first*" every day? Is it the foremost thought when you arise? Does it linger with you as you fall asleep? Does the solemn shadow of it rest on you throughout the day?

Young man, are you seeking the kingdom "*first*"? What! proposing to seek it *after* you are settled, or perhaps, descending the vale of years? Is this not deliberately despising the Lord? He says "Seek it first;" you say "not yet."

Aged man, have you sought it "*first*"—all your days? If not, surely *now*, *now*, at last, it is to find its place!

Rich man, the Lord cries to you "Seek the kingdom *first*."

Poor man, all other things will be added if you seek this *first*.

Minister of Christ, do you seek your people's esteem and goodwill, and your own comfort? Hear the word, "Seek the kingdom *first*."

And little child, begin your life with complying with this call. "One thing is needful." "One thing have I desired of the Lord, and will seek after; that I may behold the beauty of the Lord, and inquire in his temple."

This we know, that when the Lord came to earth, He sought *first* the Father's glory and our salvation. Every thing was subservient to these great ends. Night and day, in heat and cold, in weariness and in watching, in pain and in temptation. He sought *first* the glory of God and our salvation; and now asks us, for our own interests' sake, as well as because it is the most reasonable, "Seek, ye sons of men, seek ye first the kingdom."

This also we know assuredly, that it is to those, and only to those, who sought the kingdom "*first*" that the Lord, on His return, (a day that is ever getting nearer) will say, "Come, ye blessed, inherit the kingdom."  
A. A. B.

### REVERENCE.

Reverence for God is a feeling which the great majority of human beings seem to possess only in a very slight and inadequate degree. God is seldom in their thoughts, and when they do think of him, it is rather with emotions of dread and aversion than with any sentiment of genuine reverential regard. Now and then, when beholding some striking manifestation of Divine power, they for a while stand in sensible awe of their Maker; but their feeling is rather one of slavish fear, and it endures only during the alarming displays of God's majestic energy. Few seem to have in any good degree that blending of filial love, and deep awe, and holy fear, which constitutes true reverence. It is, indeed, a mournful evidence of human depravity, that the great Being, before whom angels bow, and in whose sight the heavens are unclean, should be regarded so little by the intelligent inhabitants of earth, although they are constantly surrounded and overshadowed by

the wonderful displays of his infinite power.

Those who have experienced reverence for God in a high degree have declared it to be one of the sweetest emotions of which they have ever been conscious. It will be found to be so. To love is sweet; to reverence is no less so. It is delightful to look up to a power which is irresistible, to a wisdom which is unbounded, to a holiness which is of burning purity. It is sweet to feel that we are entirely in the grasp of that infinite almightiness, and that it can never fail to protect and defend us. It is sweet to know that that illimitable wisdom thoroughly comprehends us, and absolutely understands and perceives every sorrow that pains our hearts; that it is cognisant of every want which man cannot supply, and of every virtue which man refuses to recognize, and of every grief with which man fails to sympathize. It is sweet to know that that spotless holiness will ever shine far before us, beckoning and guiding us onward to higher and higher attainments in the divine life. It is, indeed, delightful to lie in the hands of an infinite God, and feel that his might and wisdom and love can and will do for us everything that our most ardent desires and aspirations can seek.

#### O THAT I HAD WINGS!

Ps. lv. 6; Isa. xl. 31.

"Judge thou then," the voice said, "whether This or that's the better thing—  
Rainbow-tinted dove's soft feather  
Or the eagle's ruffled wing?"  
'That's the better!'—"Rest thou still  
In thy heart of hearts abase thee;  
Lose thy will in God's great will.  
By and by He will upraise thee  
In His own good time and season,  
When 'tis meet that thou shouldst go,  
And will show the fullest reason  
Why he kept thee here below.  
Wings of doves shall not be given;  
But to lift thee up to heaven  
Thou shalt have entire dominion  
O'er the eagle's soaring pinion,  
Thou shalt mount to God's own eyrie,  
And become a crowned saint,  
Thou shalt run and not be weary,  
Walk and never faint;  
Therefore utter no complaint."

Now I lie upon my bed,  
Saying, "be it so,  
I will wait in faith and hope  
Till the eagle's wings shall grow."

DR. GEORGE WILSON.

#### BUNYAN IN PRISON.

"I was had home to prison."

Home to prison! And wherefore not? Home is not the marble hall, nor the luxurious furniture, nor cloth of gold. If home be the kingdom where man reigns, in his own monarchy, over subject hearts—if home be the spot where fireside pleasures gambol, where are heard the sunny laugh of the confiding child, or the fond "What ails thee?" of the watching wife—then every essential of home was to be found, "except these bonds," in that cell on Bedford Bridge. There, in the daytime, is the heroine wife, at once bracing and soothing his spirit with her leal and womanly tenderness; and sitting at his feet, the child, a clasping tendril, blind and best beloved. There on the table is the *Book of Martyrs*, with its records of the men who were the ancestors of his faith and love; those old and heaven-patented nobility, whose blade of knighthood was the hallowed cross, and whose chariot of triumph was the ascending flame. There, nearer to his hand, is the Bible, revealing that secret source of strength which overpowered each manly heart and nerved each stalwart arm; cheering his own spirit in exceeding heaviness, and making strong, through faith, for the obedience which is even unto death. Within him the good conscience bears bravely up, and he is weaponed by this, as by a shield of triple mail. By his side, all unseen by casual guest or surly warder, there stands, with heart of grace and consolation strong, the heavenly Comforter; and from overhead, as if anointing him already with the unction of recompense, there rushes the stream of glory.

And now it is nightfall. They have had their evening worship, and as in another dungeon, "the prisoners heard them." The blind child receives the fatherly benediction, the last good-night is said to the dear ones, and Bunyan is alone. His pen is in his hand, and the Bible on the table. A solitary lamp dimly relieves the darkness. But there is fire in his eye, and there is passion in his soul. "He writes as if joy did make him write." He has felt all the fullness of his story. The pen moves too slowly for the rush of feeling as he graves his whole heart upon the page. There is beating over him a storm of inspiration. Great thoughts are striking upon his brain

## A CHILD'S SACRIFICE.

1 John iii. 18, "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed, and in truth."

A child had a beautiful canary, which sang to him from early morning. The mother of the child was ill,—so ill, that the song of the little bird, which to the boy was delicious music, disturbed and distressed her so, that she could scarcely bear to hear it. He put it in a room far away, but the bird's notes reached the sick bed, and caused pain to her in her long, feverish days. One morning, as the child stood holding his mother's hand, he saw that when his pet sang, an expression of pain passed over her dear face. She had never yet told him that she could not bear the noise, but she did so now.

"It is no music to me," she said, as he asked her if the notes were not pretty.

He looked at her in wonder. "And do you really dislike the sound?"

"Indeed I do," she said.

The child, full of love to his mother, left the room. The golden feathers of the pretty canary were glistening in the sunshine, and he was thrilling forth his loveliest notes; but they had ceased to please the boy. They were no longer pretty or soothing to him, and taking the cage in his hand, he left the house. When he returned, he told his mother that the bird would disturb her rest no more, for he had given it to his little cousin.

"But you loved it so," she said; "how could you part with the canary?"

"I loved the canary, mother," he replied; "but I love you more. I could not really love anything that gave you pain. It would not be true love if I did."—*The Quiver.*

## THE WORLD OF LIGHT.

Since o'er thy footstool here below,  
Such radiant gems are strewn,  
Oh! what magnificence must glow,  
My God! about thy throne!  
So brilliant here those drops of light—  
There the full ocean rolls how bright!

If night's blue curtain of the sky  
With thousand stars inwrought,  
Hung like a royal canopy,  
With glittering diamonds fraught—  
Be, Lord, Thy temple's outer veil,  
What splendor at the shrine must dwell!

The dazzling sun at noontide hour,  
Forth from his flaming vase,  
Flinging o'er earth the golden shower,  
Till vale and mountain blaze—  
But shows, O Lord! one beam of TRINE:  
What then, the day where thou dost shine!

Ah! how shall these dim eyes endure,  
That noon of living rays,  
Or how may spirit so impure,  
Upon the glory gaze?  
Anoint O Lord! anoint my sight,  
And robe me for that world of light.

*Dr. Mendenhall.*

and flushing upon his cheek. Cloudy and shapeless in their earliest rise within his mind, they darken into the gigantic or brighten into the beautiful, until at length he flings them into bold and burning words. Rare visions rise before him. He is in a dungeon no longer. He is in the palace Beautiful, with its sights of renown and songs of melody, with its virgins of comeliness and of discretion, and with its windows opening for the first kiss of the sun. His soul swells beyond the measure of his cell. It is not a rude lamp that glimmers on his tale. It is no longer the dark Ouse that rolls its sluggish waters at his feet. His spirit has no sense of bondage. No iron has entered into his soul. Chainless and swift he has soared to the Delectable Mountains; the light of heaven is around him; the river is the one clear as crystal, which floweth from the throne of God and of the Lamb; breezes of paradise blow freshly across it, fanning his temples and stirring his hair. From the summit of the hill Clear he catches rare splendours; the New Jerusalem sleeps in its eternal noon; the shining ones are there, each one a crowned harper unto God; this is the land that is afar off, and that is the King in his beauty; until prostrate beneath the insufferable splendour the dreamer falls upon his knees, and sobs away his agony of gladness in an ecstasy and praise. Now think of these things: endearing intercourse with wife and children, the ever fresh and ever comforting Bible, the tranquil conscience, the regal imaginings of the mind, the faith which realized them all, and light of God's approving face shining, broad and bright upon the soul, and you will understand the undying memory which made Bunyan quaintly write, "I was had home to prison."

—*Punshon's Lecture on Bunyan,*

## BEGINNINGS OF EVIL.

The words, "that ye enter not into temptation," seem to say very pointedly. "Beware of the beginning—of the beginning;" for it is in fatal connection with the next ensuing, and yet conceals what is behind. And since temptation is sure to be early with its beginnings, so too should watching and praying; early in life; early in the day; early in every undertaking. What haste the man must make who would be beforehand with temptation!

—*Foster.*

## Sabbath School Lessons.

August 24th.

## THE SOWER.—MATT. XIII. 1-23.

On account of the great multitudes which had collected to hear Him, our Saviour taught them from a boat moored in the sea of Galilee, at a short distance from the beach. Jesus taught in parables, not to conceal his doctrines from his hearers, but on the contrary to elucidate and enforce them by comparing them with natural objects. Probably there were persons engaged in sowing seed in the neighbouring fields at the time our Saviour taught, and this would render the parable the more vivid.

## 1ST.—THE PARABLE.

Ver. 4. *The wayside.*—The path between the fields, which had not, of course, been prepared for the reception of the seed.

Ver. 5. *Stony places.*—Not stones mingled with the earth, but places where a thin layer of soil covered the rock. In such places vegetation would, of course, be rapid; but for want of sufficient nourishment it would soon be withered and destroyed under the influences of the light and heat, which are so favourable to crops sown on good soil.

Ver. 7. *Thorns sprung up and choked them*—deprived them of the heat, air, and nourishment necessary to their growth. To ensure an abundant harvest, not only must the soil be good, but weeds must be carefully eradicated.

## 2ND.—THE EXPLANATION.

Ver. 19. *The word of the kingdom*—the Word of God—the gospel. It is sown by preaching in the sanctuary, by teaching in the Sabbath-school, by spiritual conversation, by religious tracts and periodicals.

Ver. 19. *Wayside hearers* are those who hear God's Word slightly, are heedless of Divine chastenings, and neglect opportunities. Many attend the preaching of the Word from custom or formality, and are heedless alike of its kind invitations and of its awful warnings. Let us learn to be on our guard against Satan, the ever-active and watchful enemy of our souls; 1 Pet. v. 8, 9. The Jews were examples of the wayside hearers.

Ver. 20. *The stony ground hearers.* Such enter upon the Christian warfare without counting the cost. They desire happiness rather than holiness. They are the "fair-weather Christians." They like the profession of the religion of Christ well enough in time of prosperity, but let adversity once arise and they immediately deny it. Such professors do not greatly to their experiences, the joy they once felt on hearing the Word, in prayer, or in any of the other ordinances. But the root

of the matter not being in them, their life not being hid with Christ in God, the persecutions and afflictions which serve to strengthen and confirm the faith of the true believer are stumbling-blocks to them. Let us hence learn the need of self-examination. Does Christ dwell in our hearts by faith? If so we may say with godly reliance upon his grace,—

"Let troubles rise, let terrors frown,  
And days of darkness fall,  
Through him all dangers we'll defy,  
And more than conquer all."

Ver. 22. *Seed among the thorns.* These thorns are said to be worldly cares. The anxiety of the farmer about the weather, of the merchant about the result of his speculations, of children about their play. In whatever heart worldly concerns occupy the first place, the seed of the Word is choked. We cannot serve God and mammon.

Ver. 23. *He that received seed into the good ground*—ground prepared for the reception of the seed by the Holy Spirit. God can give us the hearing ear and the understanding heart, if we seek them from him. And if the good seed has taken root in our hearts, it will bear fruit. According to the measure of grace given unto us, we shall manifest our love to God and to our fellow-men in our good works.

August 31st, 1862.

## WATER BECOMES BLOOD.

EXOD. VII. 1-25.

1. *The Lord encourages Moses and Aaron to go unto Pharaoh.*

*I have made thee a god unto Pharaoh*—a god, not essentially, but by commission. A divinely appointed delegate—having power to punish even a powerful monarch by the infliction of plagues. And as God has been pleased to make known his will to man through the instrumentality of his prophets, so was Moses to communicate with Pharaoh by means of Aaron. *And I will harden Pharaoh's heart*—that is, I will permit it to be hardened by withholding my grace, and by giving him up to the delusions of Satan and his own wicked heart. *And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord*—If we refuse to know the Lord as a God of mercy we shall be compelled to know him as a God of justice. We shall be made to feel the power of his wrath.

2. *Aaron's rod becomes a serpent.*

Moses and Aaron had before entreated Pharaoh in the name of Jehovah to allow the people to go and worship in the wilderness—they now, upon being challenged to do so, produce their credentials. *Now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner*

*with their enchantments.* Of these magicians, we find that Jannes and Jambres were the principal; 2 Tim. iii. 8. There are three different ways of accounting for the rods of the magicians being changed into serpents. Some think that the magicians performed their apparent miracles by sleight of hand.—In the practice of this deception they may have employed a species of snake, said to be common in Egypt, which when held in a particular manner becomes so rigid as closely to resemble a rod. Others believe that they performed miracles by Satanic agency. The third opinion is, that the Lord, unexpectedly to the magicians themselves, changed their rods into serpents. Nor is there in this view anything inconsistent with the Divine attributes. That Moses and Aaron were commissioned by God was sufficiently attested by the fact that Moses' rod swallowed up those of the magicians. Certainly the idea that Satan or any created being has the power of changing a rod into a serpent is to be rejected as utterly absurd. The infinite wisdom and power of God are as manifest in the mechanism of a serpent as they are in the flower that decks the field, the sun that shines in the firmament, or the structure of the universe.

### 3. *The waters of the river are turned into blood.*

*Get thee unto Pharaoh in the morning.*—Pharaoh resorted at that season to the river, perhaps for exercise, but more probably for the purpose of worshipping the Nile, as it, or its tutelary deity, was one of the chief idols of the Egyptians. In Egypt, the annual overflowings of the Nile compensated for the want of rain, and the same river supplied the inhabitants of that country with abundance of fish. The waters of the Nile are clear and wholesome. For these reasons the Egyptians adored their river—"they worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator."—*They shall be turned to blood.* This was the first of the ten plagues inflicted upon the Egyptians. The Lord is ever merciful; he warned Pharaoh before sending the judgment. That which had been the source of the chief comforts of the Egyptians, became to them, for a time, a most grievous nuisance. How awful must it have been to have witnessed those vast streams of blood putrefying under the burning sun of that country! All the fish in the river died, their dead bodies adding to the general mass of corruption. The water in all their streams, and in all their vessels, whether of wood or of stone, was converted into blood. Let us take heed that the Gospel, which like a stream of life flows through our land, does not become to us, by our wilful and obstinate rejection of it, "the savour of death unto death." *And the magicians of*

*Egypt did so with their enchantments.* They imitated or rather aped the miracle of Moses by changing some of the little water, which remained in Egypt, into blood. This was sufficient to harden the wicked heart of Pharaoh. It was not in the power of these magicians to confer a benefit upon their countrymen, by changing the blood into water.—Satan, however specious may be his pretences, only adds to the miseries of his votaries.—*And all the Egyptians digged round about the river for water to drink.* The Lord, in his great mercy, probably permitted them by this means to obtain some water.

Learn—1. The power of God: everything is under his control.

2. That God will most certainly punish cruelty and oppression, either in this world, or in the next.

3. That God mingles mercy with judgment; entreaties and miracles were tried with Pharaoh before he was plagued.

September 7th.

### THE TARES.—MATT. XIII. 24-30; 36-43

Here we have another picture illustrative of spiritual things. The sower in this parable is the Son of Man. Ministers of the gospel, Sabbath-school teachers, all good men are but the instruments he employs. He sowed good seed, but while men slept an enemy sowed tares. Tares are a kind of grass, common in Palestine, which closely resemble wheat. They are poisonous—stunning and making giddy those who eat them. The good seed, and the tares, as explained in ver. 38, mean respectively the children of God, and the ungodly. *The enemy that sowed them is the devil.* He is the great enemy both of God and man. *The harvest is the end of the world.*—This world, and all that is in it, will soon come to an end; Ps. cii. 25, 26; Is. li. 6; 2 Pet. iii. 10.

*The reapers are the angels.*—We learn from Scripture that those heavenly beings are employed about the people of God, in various missions of mercy and love. It was an angel who first announced to the eastern shepherds the birth of our Lord; Luke ii. 11. An angel appeared administering comfort to our blessed Saviour in his agony in Gethsemane; Luke xxii. 43. It was an angel who communicated to the women at the sepulchre the glad tidings of the resurrection, Matt. xxviii. 5; and the Apostle informs us that "they are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation;" Heb. i. 14. These very angels will be employed by God, as the instruments by whom he will take signal vengeance upon the wicked.

Learn—1. *The love of God.*—This world

shall not be destroyed until he has gathered into his fold the last of his saved ones.

2. *The great need there is of self-examination.*—The wheat and tares grow side by side. Mere nominal professors are intermingled here with true believers, and there is frequently not much difference between them. But let us not therefore judge censoriously of others. God alone knows the heart, and with His assistance, we may, taking His Word as our standard, judge of the state of our own hearts.

3. *The fearful punishment of the wicked.*—Although hypocrites mingle here with the children of God, it is gladsome to think that there will ultimately be a complete and everlasting separation. Our merciful Saviour has made no secret of the terrible destiny which awaits those who die in their sins. Those who perish, after the enjoyment of gospel privileges, will never be able to say that they perished without warning. The punishment of the finally impenitent will be great, endless, hopeless; ver. 42; xxv. 46. How fearful the thought that those who have been companions in sin, may hereafter be mutual tormentors.

4. *The happiness which awaits the just.*—“Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father;” ver. 43. God will acknowledge them to be His children; Rev. xxi. 7. They shall be made perfectly holy (Col. i. 22), as well as perfectly happy (Is. xxxv. 10), and shall be openly acquitted of all the accusations of the enemy, before assembled worlds; Matt. xxv. 34.

### SPARROWS.

Matt. x. 29—31. “Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.”

The value here indicated is equal to three farthings of English money, farthing being equal to the tenth part of a Roman penny.

The common house-sparrow is known in every part of England, but they are seldom found far from the abodes of men. During the warmer months, they live chiefly in pairs, but at other times associate in larger numbers. They are voracious, and feed largely on insects, caterpillars, and decaying matter, though they refuse not more delicate rations. But for the constant war they wage with the ordinary house-fly, and the common cabbage butterfly, their numbers would be indefinitely increased. Though themselves the destroyers of corn and fruit, they still cheer our abodes, and serve some important purpose.

The sparrows which flutter and twitter about dilapidated buildings at Jerusalem, and crevices of the city walls, are very nu-

merous. In some of the more lonely streets they are so noisy as almost to overpower every other sound. A person who resided in the country told me that these birds are sometimes brought to market in order to be sold as food. Being so small and abundant, their value singly must, of course, be trifling; and hence, as the custom of selling them was an ancient one, we see how pertinent was the Saviour's illustration for showing how minutely God watches over all events, and how entirely His people may rely on His care and goodness.

*Affection of the Sparrow.*—A very pretty trait of natural affection, on the part of the despised little sparrows, occurred in Perth some years since. A sparrow, which had been seized by a cat, was rescued by a lady, but the poor bird was so much hurt as to be totally unable to fly and rejoin its companions, who assembled on the top of the dyke. The lady took her little charge, and placed it in the inside of her window, when several of the birds sought to comfort their wounded mate. Many encircled him, while others went for food, with which he was liberally supplied. Till able to join his companions, these attentions were continued; and the lady might be seen, while engaged with her needle from day to day, with several birds around her.

### THE LITTLE EVANGELIST.

After a meeting held for the revival of religion, a young man in the gallery was observed to weep bitterly. The minister's little son observed him, and thought, “If I could only get away from grandmamma, I would speak to him about Jesus.” The child's grandmother presently got engrossed in talking on the same blessed subject to some anxious souls; and he slipped away without her perceiving it, ran to the staircase, and met the young man coming down. “What ails you?” asked the child. “Oh, I want to see Mr. S. the minister.” “I'll do for you just as well as papa,” said the little fellow; “for you want to hear about Jesus—that's what ails you.” “Well, and what do you know about Jesus?” “Why, he is my very own Saviour! and He will be your Saviour too, this very minute, and take away all your sins, if only you believe.” “And are all your sins taken away?” asked the young man. “Yes every one of them. Do you think I could call Jesus my Saviour unless he had really taken them all away for ever?” Five or six other young men had gathered round to hear this conference with the child, who added—“And if these boys would also believe on Jesus, he would take away their sins at once!” The young men went away thoughtful. The first speaker was hopefully converted to God. See how even a child can successfully preach Christ's Gospel, when he feels it himself.—(*Sabbath School Times.*)

## A SKETCH IN BRENTFORD.

One morning, I called at a cottage, and found an old man with a cup of tea before him and dry bread; everything looked clean and orderly. On entering, I wished him "Good morning."

He asked me to sit down. I saw plainly that he was afflicted; he had been paralyzed, and his speech was very much affected.— "Well, my friend," said I, "have you got a Bible?"

He replied, "I cannot read."

"Then I will read to you."

I read from the 3rd chapter of St. John.— He listened with deep attention, and was very much struck with the 16th verse. I read it twice to him, and told him it was God's own Word, and spoke to him of the love of Christ. He wept very much, then kneeling down, I prayed. On leaving him, he said, "I don't know how to pray." I then read part of the 18th chapter of St. Luke. He was very much struck with the publican's prayer, and, with his hand on his heart, said he was a great sinner.

On my next visit, he was not at home, but I saw his wife, a nice, clean looking-woman. She said, "My old man is not in." On inquiring how he was, she said, "He makes me feel quite miserable; he is so dull and mopish, I cannot get him to speak to me. Are you the person who came and read to him. He said you were very kind. He went to chapel on Sunday, which he never would do before."

As I was leaving the house, I saw him standing against the wall, leaning on his stick; I walked up to him, wishing him "Good morning."

"My friend," he said, "will you be so kind as to tell me that prayer again?" I said, "Yes," and walked with him in-doors. His wife said she was very glad I had come to talk to him; it was of no use for her to say anything, they were so ignorant, and both wanted teaching. I read again the 3rd of St. John and the 18th of St. Luke; we kneeled down and prayed; he appeared to be deeply convinced of sin.

I invited him and his wife to our cottage prayer meeting. They came, and the room was soon filled. Many earnest prayers were offered to God that night. It was evident there was a powerful struggle going on in the mind of the poor old man; his whole body appeared to shake, his hands were clasped, and he seemed engaged in fervent prayer. Whilst singing that beautiful verse,

"He breaks the power of cancelled sin,  
And sets the prisoner free;  
His blood can make the foulest clean;  
His blood avails for me."

He said, "I do believe it avails for me. My

sins are pardoned; my load of guilt is all gone. I am happy, happy. I never felt like this before. I feel quite a new man." On bidding me "good night," he said "God bless you, and bless the Lord." His simplicity was great. He went down to his house justified, rejoicing in the God of his salvation. I saw him nearly every day after this; his eyes would beam with joy whenever he saw me, and placing his hand upon his heart, he would say, "I am happy, happy."

A few days after his conversion he was taken ill. His wife was leading him to a prayer meeting when he was seized with a fit and was obliged to be conveyed home. Eleven days after this he died. I visited him during his illness. I think he was the most patient sufferer I ever saw. Whenever I conversed with him in reference to his confidence in God his answers were satisfactory. On one occasion I said to him "You are passing through the valley of the shadow of death; have you any fear?" He replied, "No: happy, happy, going to Jesus." He felt very anxious about his wife, and wished her to promise to meet him in heaven. On his son asking him if he wanted anything, he said, "No; I have a better home than this prepared for me. I want you to promise to go to chapel and meet me in heaven." I said to him, "When you cannot speak to tell us you are happy will you wave your hand?" The last time I saw him was on the Sunday evening; he was very weak. I said, "You will soon be in glory," to which he replied "yes." On leaving I bid him farewell for the last time; he waved his hand, and never spoke after. On the Monday he died. His happy spirit took its flight from a world of suffering and sorrow to be for ever with the Lord. To God be all the praise!

Since the death of the poor old man his wife has found peace. His son has signed the pledge, and says he never felt so happy in his life.

I am very thankful for what the Lord has done, but how much is still wanting!—*The Bible Woman's Journal.*

## THE SYCAMORE TREE.

Luke xix. 4, "And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him: for He was to pass that way."

603. The Sycamore Tree.—Dr. Thomson, in "The Land and in the Book," shows that the sycamore is the same with the sycamone tree; and that neither is the mulberry, as many critics maintain. Then he brings out with great clearness and force the meaning of six different passages of Scripture. This tree generally planted by the wayside, with giant arms, stretching often quite across the

road. This accounts for its being chosen by Zaccheus, as at once easy to climb, and also as affording a good view of the Saviour as He passed along (Luke xix. 4). Again, the fruit is small, very insipid, and used only by the poorer classes. Hence, a gatherer of sycamore fruit would belong to the humbler classes, as Amos implies (Amos vii. 24).—The tree also strikes its roots to a great depth, and in size they correspond to the large branches above; thus giving great force to the words of Christ (Luke xvii. 6), "Say to this sycamore tree, *Be thou plucked up by the roots.*" But the mulberry tree, with which some confound it, is more easily uprooted than any other tree of the same size in the country. The author might have added, that the heavy branching top of the sycamore gives great force to the additional statement of our Lord, "Be thou planted in the sea;" for it is not, *Be thou cast into the sea, there to float and wear away;* but, *Be thou planted there, to grow and flourish;* a beautiful illustration of the seeming impossibilities wrought by the power of faith; as Stier says, in his "Words of Jesus" (iv. 258), "It is a perfect impossibility in the course of nature, and so is a type and symbol of the spiritual, supernatural abiding of believers firm in the tumultuous shifting sea of this world, *in* as it is of offence and sin." The wood of this tree is soft and of little value, thus illustrating the meaning of Isa. ix. 10, and 1 Kings x. 27. And, last of all, it grows only on the low plains, and cannot bear the cold of the mountains. Dr. Russell omits it altogether from his list of trees around Aleppo; it cannot live in a plain so far north as that. It was one of the wonders wrought in Egypt, that their sycamores were destroyed with frost (Psa. lxxviii. 47). Dr. T. might have also referred to 1 Chron. xii. 29, "Over the sycamore trees in the low plains was Baalhanan."

### THE FULNESS OF JESUS.

To the half of his kingdom, the Persian monarch promised whatever his queen might ask: and generous, right royal as was his offer, it helps us by its very meanness—as a molehill at the foot of a mountain, as a taper's feeble yellow flame held up against the blazing sun—to form some estimate of the boundless grace of our Lord Christ. *Half His kingdom!* He offers nothing by halves. His promise is illimitable. "All mine is thine." Confining his generosity neither to kingdoms, nor continents, nor worlds, nor heaven itself, He lays the whole universe at the poor sinner's feet.—Away, then, with fears and cares! There is nothing we need that we shall not get—nothing we can ask that we shall not receive. "It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell."—Transferring Divine wealth, if I may so speak to our account in the bank of heaven, and giving us unlimited credit there, Jesus says, "All things whatsoever ye ask in prayer believing, ye shall receive."—*Guthrie.*

### DANGER TO YOUTH FROM IMPROPER BOOKS.

Books of a certain kind are a fruitful source of injury to the young.

Ours, we love to say, is a reading age; and few are the parents who do not feel gratified to see their children become fond of this employment. But we should make a great blunder if we conclude that all must be well because they subscribe for a magazine, and are often seen with a book in their hands. What tales of crime in its worst possible form have been told within a few years, in some of the high places of our own land, as the known and recognized result of pernicious reading! Again and again have both adultery and blood been traced to this single source. As it regards the books with which the country is fairly inundated, it may well be said, "All is not gold that glitters."

If one contains the bread of life, another is filled with deadly poison. To say the least, there is a kind of sickly sentimentalism pervading many of the fashionable volumes of the day, which scarcely less really unfit the reader for the duties of earth than for intercourse with heaven. "Such reading," as Hannah More well remarks, "relaxes the mind, which needs hardening—dissolves the heart, which needs fortifying—stirs the imagination, which needs quieting—irritates the passions, which need calming—and, above all, disinclines and disqualifies for active virtues and spiritual exercises." Young men must take heed what they read, as well as how they hear. The eye is as fruitful an inlet of evil as the ear.

It is my deliberate opinion that thoughtful, studious youth are exposed to few greater perils than are to be found in books. So fully am I convinced of this, that I could see a large majority of the publications that come in such crowds from the press consigned to one enormous conflagration without a lingering regret. The ability to read and the love of reading, like a thousand other things good in themselves, have their attendant evils. A bad book must exert a bad influence, and the more touching it is in incident, and the more captivating in style, the worse of necessity this influence will be.

The heaviest censures upon such works have fallen sometimes from the authors themselves. Goldsmith, though a very popular novelist and writer of plays, gave this advice in respect to the education of a nephew: "Above all things never let him touch a novel or romance." Moore had good sense and right feeling enough to keep his voluptuous lines from his own daughters, though not enough to prevent his sending them abroad

into the world. It is affirmed, too, of a celebrated tragedian, that he never allowed his children to see the inside of a theatre. There is meaning in such opinions, coming from such men.—*Rev. Dr. Magie.*

### PURITY OF INTENTION.

That we should seek the glory of God in every action we do, is expressed by St. Paul:—"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." When we observe this rule, every action becomes religious, and every meal an act of worship. With purity of intention, the most common act of life is sanctified; but without it, even our devotions are imperfect and vicious; for he that prays out of custom, or gives alms for praise, or fasts to be accounted religious, is but a Pharisee in his devotion or in his alms, and a hypocrite in his fast. If a man visit his sick friend, and watches at his pillow for charity's sake, and because of his old affection, we admire it; but if he does it in hope of a legacy, he is a vulture, and only watches for the carcase. The same things are honest and dishonest; the manner of doing them, and the design, make the difference.

### RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

#### ITALY.

A curious incident occurred last month at Rome, which shows that the Papal Government does not feel itself in circumstances to act as rigorously as it would have done a couple of years ago towards any one circulating heretical books. A pious clergyman of the Church of England, long a missionary in the West Indies, by name Rev. Mr. W. Blood, was mercifully preserved from shipwreck, when, about ten years ago, the steamship "Amazon" was burned at sea, and most of his fellow-passengers perished. Such an event most naturally produced a deep impression on his mind; he prepared and preached at Southampton, on the Sabbath after his arrival, a sermon having reference to it, and applying the danger he had so lately escaped spiritually to unconverted sinners. It was afterwards printed, and gratuitously circulated by its author, both in English and French. During this late winter he resided in Nice, and had his little tract printed in Italian. He never circulates the Bible or other books, but the circulation of his "Loss of the Amazon" is considered by him "preaching Christ;" and if it appears to others a monomania, he is to be honoured, at least, for the untiring zeal he displays. Among other places he visited Rome, and, by means which it would be imprudent to specify, got 500 copies of his tract introduced into that city. The work of distribution was begun by him at once, and planting the tracts with priests or monks is his highest aim. He had not been long employed ere his doings

were reported to Monsignore Matteucci, the head of the Police, and Mr. Blood had an official despatch summoning him to that worthy's presence: He was most politely received and treated, but told that he must give up his tracts and leave Rome immediately. It was promised him that the former should be restored to him at Civita Vecchia when he left, and he stipulated that he should have a day or two to see Rome ere the latter injunction was enforced. He was called a second time, and told that, instead of giving back his books, they would give him an equivalent in money, with which he might buy a new supply when he got to Naples; and that as he had paid *anticipatamente* for his lodgings, they would refund the price to him, but that he must leave Rome immediately. He protested he did not want their money, but that they should keep their promise, and give him up his books at the frontier; but at last he was obliged to accept the money and depart. News of this came to Mr. Consul Severn's ears, who, concluding it would be an Inquisition case, telegraphed at once to Earl Russell for instructions, and he was much surprised, when he waited on Monsignore Matteucci, to be told by him that the matter was amicably settled! Mr. Blood has since been holding sensation meetings at Naples and Florence, with posters announcing that the tracts "have been provided at the expense of the papal Government, and will be distributed gratis to the assembly." It is well for him that his visit to Rome was in 1862, when the agitation about the temporal power occupies such attention, otherwise he would have met with very different treatment.—*News of the Churches.*

THE HERVEY ISLANDS are a group in the North Pacific, which have been greatly blessed by the labours of missionaries, and the whole Bible, translated into their tongue, has been just printed in England and sent to them. The joy of the natives was very great when they first arrived. As they brought the cases from the sea-side to the mission-houses, they sang in their own language.

"The word is come, the volume complete;  
Let us learn the good word, our joy is great."

At a public meeting held on the occasion, one of the natives arose and said: "My brethren and sisters, this is my resolution—the *dear* shall never cover my Bible; the moths shall never eat it; the mildew shall never rot it; my light and my joy."

SYRIA.—There is a severe persecution at several points. The political prospect is disquieting. But a spiritual work is in progress. A physician, about fifty years of age; formerly of the Papal Greek Church, has been admitted to the Beirut Church. Mr. Ford reports a growing interest in spiritual things, and the Profession of Protestantism by many individuals in the field of the Sidon station.

POLYNESIA.—Dr Turner, from Samoa, reports that in seven years 7,000 copies of the Old Testament, and 25,000 of the New, have been sold in the Samoan islands at remunerating prices.