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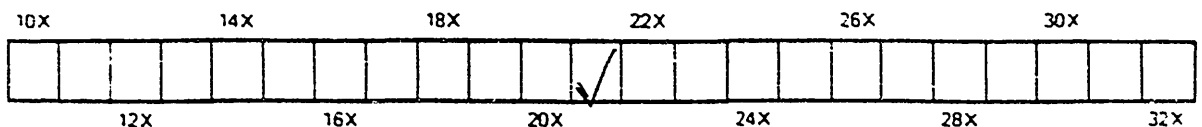
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THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

BY REV. WILLIAM AITKEN, SMITH'S FALLS.

(Concluded from page 313.)

But we are to conceive of heaven not only as a distinct place, and as a place of saintly society, but,

3rd. *As a place of rest and joy.*

The language of the text implies an occasion of festive rejoicing. The representation which it gives of the redeemed is that of a multitude coming from the east and west, and reclining—as at a banquet, after the manner of the ancients—with the illustrious patriarchs, with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob. Now, whatever in this figurative representation may be deemed unsuitable to the pure spirituality of the heavenly world, at any rate it obviously conveys the ideas of *rest and joy*.

In that heavenly world there will be the entire absence of everything that can occasion uneasiness or disquietude, the entire absence of everything incompatible with the experience of a perfect rest. In this respect that which is imperfect shall be done away, that which is perfect shall have come.

In this present world the grand causes of unrest, whether of body or of mind, are sin and the death which is by sin, and the various forms of mortal suffering; all more or less directly attributable to sin, and testifying to its dire malignity. But these causes will not operate, will have no existence, in heaven. *There* there will be no more sin and therefore no more death—“no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor any more pain,” nor anything whereby an undisturbed rest might be precluded.

But the felicity of the redeemed in the world above will be far from being of this

purely negative character only—far from consisting merely in exemption from present ill. In heaven not only will there be perfect rest but fulness of joy. What, indeed, can be wanting to the measure of their felicity who have God Himself for their portion—God Himself exercising on their behalf the boundless infinitude of his power to bless? What happiness of which their nature is susceptible, and which God can bestow, will not be theirs?

And to crown all, that freedom from all that can produce disturbance or inquietude—that unmixed and perfect positive blessedness, which will be realized by the redeemed in the heavenly places, will be *eternal*. Unlike the best enjoyments peculiar to earth, this blessedness will be subject to no fluctuation or vicissitude, and will never end. The pleasures of those who dwell with God above will be pleasures for evermore. “The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion”—the heavenly Zion—“with songs and everlasting joy on their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”

How glorious a consummation to the experiences of this present life, with its highest happiness so chequered and unsatisfying, with its incessant conflicts and trials! How worthy to engage our earnest desires, and to call forth and sustain our persevering endeavours! How richly fraught, in the believing anticipation, with consolation and peace amid all the ills which so darkly gather around us here! How light becomes all present affliction when compared with that future glory.

Nay, the present affliction will contribute to the working out of that far more exceeding, that eternal weight of glory. "For which cause," exclaims an apostle, in language which may well be the common utterance of all God's genuine people, "we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

We have thus said that the text teaches us to think of heaven as a distinct place, as a place of saintly society, and as a place of rest and joy. The connection in which the text occurs, however, leads us to remark that heaven, with its saintly society, its never-ending and holy joy, will not be the universal destiny of our race. Vast and varied as that blessed society in its final aggregate will be, it will still be far from including all mankind without exception. While there are those who, believing, shall come from the east and the west, and sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, there are those, finally impenitent and unbelieving, who shall be "cast out into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth." The one destination or the other lies before us. Hell if not heaven will be our eternal portion. And we ought not to disguise from our minds the awful alternative; but setting it fairly before us, and duly pondering it, should be stimulated the more earnestly to seek to be able to "read our title clear to mansions in the skies."

We shall only observe, in conclusion, how that in the assemblies of God's people on his day, in his sanctuary below, in the exercises there engaged in, and the privileges there enjoyed, we have a present pre-figuration of the society of the redeemed

in the world of glory, and of those exercises and privileges in which their perfect blessedness will be realized. "In God's own day, in God's own house," therefore, let us endeavour to rise in spirit to that high world whither Jesus our Forerunner has gone—the happy mansions of the "just made perfect." Let us anticipate the the still nobler privileges of that glorious world in which, for all God's people, there is a place prepared. And while from the anticipation deriving influences of sovereign virtue to sustain and cheer amid all the troubles of this earthly scene, and inspire new vigour in the prosecution of our heavenward course, let it avail also to call forth the deep gratitude of our souls to the Redeemer mighty to save, to whose ineffable love and abounding grace we are indebted for all that is bright and animating in our present hope, and for all that will be glorious and blissful in its eternal fruition. Now to Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests to God, even the Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

"WE SHALL BE CHANGED."

Some men went to China once, and because they were forbidden to carry the silk-worm out of the country, they hid some of the little creatures' eggs in the top of their staves, and so out of those two dry staves came all the silk-worms in Europe since. What a wonder! A poor rag-picker takes a short stick in his hand, and goes into the dirty gutters of the streets of the city, and picks up little bits of rags and paper. These he puts into his dirty bag. But these are washed and made over, and come out the pure, white sheet of paper, beautiful enough to have the Queen write on it. Who can doubt that God can take these poor bodies and out of them raise a new and better body? Out of the very darkness and bones of the grave he can make something that will be brighter than the sun for ever.

A DREAM THAT IS NOT ALL A DREAM.

A merchant at the close of a day during which, in addition to uncommon business perplexity, his patience had been sorely taxed by repeated and inopportune applications for donations to various charities, found himself in his favorite retreat—his library. Wrapped in a sumptuous gown, his feet clad in easy and richly-wrought slippers, he had flung his wearied frame into his study chair, and, exhausted by the cares of the day, he fell asleep. In his sleep he dreamed. In his dream he saw a stranger standing before him, who, drawing a paper from his bosom, thus addressed him:

"My friend, I come to beg of you, in view of the special necessities of our Master's cause at this time, an increase, for this year, of one-third upon your ordinary subscription to the cause of Foreign Missions."

"Sir," he replied, "this year will be to me one of uncommon expense. My new house is just finished and furnished, and such are the demands upon my purse, that I shall hardly be able to give as much for that cause as I did last year."

The stranger then drew forth a second paper from his bosom, and made the same request with reference to the Domestic Mission work.

The merchant, annoyed at this, repeated his reply with additional emphasis and in briefer terms.

No way disconcerted by the rebuff, the stranger, laying the two papers upon the table, and drawing another from his bosom, made a like request in behalf of the Bible cause.

To this the half-angry merchant gave a short and not over-kind response.

This paper the stranger laid upon the table, and drew still another from his bosom, and asked the same favor for the Colporteur work.

This request being answered with a frown, the stranger laid it upon the table, drew forth yet another, and asked for a like increase to his ordinary subscription for that. And so he continued his appeals, until quite a pile of subscription papers lay upon the merchant's table, while the irri-

tated, and, in his own view, insulted man, looked on in sullen silence.

At last the stranger, more in sorrow than in anger, yet in a tone that thrilled the listener to his very heart, said:

"Look at me, and listen! *Five years ago* you were on the very verge of bankruptcy. Your fortune seemed just spreading its wings to leave you penniless, and your family without means to buy even bread to eat. And in that dark hour, O! how you prayed—prayed for relief from the threatened ruin! Who was it that pitied your distress, heard your prayer, and rolled the dismal cloud away?"

"*Seven years ago*, you lay upon what you deemed, and your weeping friends considered, a bed of death. The physician had given up all hope. And when you thought of that woman soon to become a widow, of those children soon to become orphans, and of their probable struggles, with privation and want, you turned your face to the wall and wept. O! how bitter were those tears! And you cried out for reprieve—reprieve until you might make some provision for their wants. Who was it heard that piteous cry, and gave you what you asked?"

"*Ten years ago*, your oldest boy sank into the grave. As the hour drew on, you saw that he was dying in despair. And as you thought of the awful future that awaited him, you remember the anguish of your spirit. Entering your closet, you locked the door, and spent one long night in agonizing prayer. You prayed not for the life, but for the soul, of your darling! 'O God!' you cried, 'save, save, for Jesus' sake, save the soul of my dying child!' Who was it heard that prayer and sent your son to heaven in the triumphs of faith and the joys of a brilliant hope of everlasting bliss?"

"*Fifteen years ago*, you were in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity. A sense of your guilt seized you, and for days and weeks there seemed to be no ray of hope for your poor soul. The darkness became more intense. Comfort forsook your spirit by day, and sleep your eyes by night. But just when a settled despair seemed to seal up your spirit to an awful doom, the light broke, and you sprang from despair to the arms of a forgiving

Redeemer, and a joy like that of heaven filled your cup to overflowing. Who was it pitied you in that dark hour, and took your sins away?"

As the merchant listened to the thrilling tale, trembling seized his limbs, a sweat broke out upon his brow; and looking up, he saw two hands held out to him. They had been pierced with nails, and were dropping blood. Glancing at the face of the speaker, he saw streams of blood like great tears streaming down that face of love, from the wounds made by the crown of thorns. The side, too, had been pierced with a spear, and the feet were torn and bleeding.

And as he gazed, he awoke. It was a dream; but deep in his soul he knew that it was not alka dream. And kneeling upon the floor, he lifted his hands to heaven and cried for pardon, and then and there he pledged his soul, his body, and his fortune to Him whose life-blood had been poured out for his salvation.

THE UNSEEN.

Can I see the *wind* on a stormy day? I cannot. But I can see the effects of its force and power. When I see the clouds driven before it, and the trees bending under it—when I hear it whistling through doors and windows, or howling round the old chimney-tops. I do not for a moment doubt its existence. I say, "There is a wind." Just so it is with the presence of the Spirit in the soul.

Can I see the *dew* of heaven as it falls on a summer evening? I cannot. It comes down softly and gently, noiseless and imperceptible. But when I go forth in the morning, after a cloudless night, and see every leaf sparkling with moisture, and feel every blade of grass damp and wet, I say at once, "There has been a dew." Just so it is with the presence of the Spirit in the soul.

Can I see the *hand* of the sower when I walk through the corn-fields in the month of July? I cannot. I see nothing but millions of ears rich with grain, and bending to the ground with ripeness. But do I suppose that harvest came by chance and grew of itself? I suppose nothing of the

kind. I know, when I see those corn-fields, that the plough and the harrow were at work one day, and that a hand has been there which sowed the seed. Just so it is with the work of the Spirit in the soul.

Can I see the *magnetic fluid* in the compass-needle? I cannot. It acts in a hidden mysterious way. But when I see that little piece of iron always turning to the north, I know at once that it is under the secret influence of magnetic power. Just so it is with the work of the Spirit in the soul.

Can I see the *mainspring* of my watch, when I look upon its face? I cannot. But when I see the fingers going round, and telling the hours and minutes of the day in regular succession, I do not doubt the mainspring's existence. Just so it is with the work of the Spirit.

Can I see the *steersman* of the homeward-bound ship when she comes first into sight, and her sails whiten the horizon? I cannot. But when I stand on the pier-head, and see that ship working her course over the sea towards the harbour's mouth, like a thing of life, I know well there is one at the helm who guides her movements. Just so it is with the work of the Spirit.—*Rylz.*

HOW SHALL WE ESCAPE?

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"—(Hab. ii. 3.)

That is a solemn question, my friend, and deserves serious consideration. You do not deny that you are in danger, nor that a way of escape is provided; but you are not disposed to take advantage of it, and you ask, Is there any other? If this be neglected, to what next may you turn?

God answers,—There is no other way.—"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."—(Acts iv. 12.) "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."—(John iii. 36.)

Reason answers,—There can be no other. This is a *great salvation*, a way in which the justice and holiness of God can be reconciled with his mercy, and the just God be also the Saviour of sinners. It is a scheme of grace-working of himself, such as he alone could have conceived or executed. If this be rejected, we can expect no other choice.

Experience answers,—There is no other.—
Oh, listen to the dismal sounds which reach us from the shores of a dark eternity! Thousands of lost souls tell us with one voice of anguish, "There is no other way of escape! We rejected the great salvation, and we are here for ever!"

Oh, escape now for thy life! Trifle no longer with this great salvation. You say,—“I am not making a model of Christ,—I am not telling others to refuse him,—I am not trampling the blood of the covenant under my own feet,—I am only neglecting it!” Ah, but neglect will be fatal! There is no neutral ground here, no middle place of safety. If not in the Refuge, you must meet the storm in all its fury. You must either escape in the life-boat, or perish in the sinking vessel.

WILLIE'S FIRST OATH.

A little boy came in from school the other day, looking very unhappy. Was he hurt? No. Had the boys plagued him? No. Had he been in mischief?—No. What was the matter with Willie? He hardly spoke at supper time, and ate very little. His mother went up to bed with him, and she asked again “Willie, what ails you dear?” “Mother,” said he—“mother I swore. The minute I spoke it I was afraid of God, and ran home.—Mother, if I could only wipe those wicked words out of my mouth—if I only could. Mother, will God forgive me, ever forgive me for taking his holy name in vain?—Pray for me, mother,” and Willie sank upon his knees and hid his face. His mother did pray for him, and Willie did pray for himself—prayed to be forgiven—prayed that he might never, never profane the name of God again. “I'd rather be dumb all my life long,” said Willie, “than to be a swearer.”

The next day he asked his mother to write down all the Bible said about profane swearing; he wanted the word of God on the subject, he said, “he wanted to study it, and stick it on his mind, and carry it about with him everywhere; so she found and copied this text:

“Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who taketh his name in vain.”—Ex. xx. 8. This is the third commandment.

THE OBJECT OF LIVING.

The richest man in a commercial city, stopped the mouth of a grumbler by asking if he would become the manager of all his property for his “food and clothes;” for, said he, “that is all I get.” And when one sets himself candidly to inquire what else he gets out of the pursuit of wealth, or its possession, he is driven to the admission that, in reality, he has nothing which may not be enjoyed by those who have but little of his riches. All that money will not buy—contentment, love, and heaven—all is just as truly within the reach of others, as of him who counts his gold by millions. Money will not buy peace of mind. It cannot make a softer pillow than the poor man has, who goes to bed with a clear conscience and comfortable health.—But from time immemorial to time present, men have been chasing after wealth as if it could buy that which they seem to have less of after they are rich than ever before.

But there is luxury in living, if there is not perfect bliss in living in luxury. There is luxury in living, if the true end and aim of life are kept in view. There is the possibility of amassing a store of wealth, that will yield permanent satisfaction, giving to its possessor all the enjoyment that the noblest mind can crave, and this without the possibility that it will diminish with years, or pall on the taste from long experience. This is to be found in a life of USEFULNESS. And this is the most that any man can get out of life, who looks at the grand object for which as a rational, accountable being, he ought to live.

To be useful, he must be holy. Virtue is the mainspring of all right action, and he who has his heart right, loves to act aright. His own soul being at peace, he looks out upon the world and seeks for objects on which to spend his sympathies and powers. Being good, he desires to do good. His own goodness makes him a companion of the great Author of all goodness, with whom he has communion as friend with friend. He communes with holiness in all kindred minds, and feels his spirit in sweet accord with it, wherever found in the universe. This sympathy with the pure lifts him above a world of sin, and delivers him from the suffering he would endure if the shafts of the wicked could reach him. Conscious of always meaning to do right, and strong in his purpose, it is no great trial to have his good evil spoken of, or not spoken of at all. He can bear opposition or neglect, assured that all things will work together for his good, though his own good is the least of the motives that propel him to his course of action. With such an even mind, it is a joy to him, to do, and not a misery to

suffer! Even pain becomes sweet when endured in a good cause, and he counts not even his life dear, if by its sacrifice he can win the great end for which life was given.

Not those only who are doing great things are working out the object of life. Here is the grand error over which thousands stumble into lives of inglorious action. Because they cannot be leaders, they will not be soldiers. Because they cannot do some great thing, they will do nothing. The names of martyrs and reformers, of philanthropists, and of many who have done the world some great service, ring in their ears, and would rouse them to action, if they saw a field of duty and a harvest ripe for their sickle. But the world is not in need of such spirits only. When they are wanted, they will come at the call of God, and stand in their lot to do and die.—

What the world needs now, is a race of men and women to be holy themselves, and show the power of holiness to those around them. Let each man, as did the returning Jews, build the wall of the city over against his own door, and soon the work will be done, and well done. Let every man do good as he has opportunity, and the opportunities will be abundant, and he will have no time to spare.

Specially, let him see to it, that his own vineyard is not left to lie waste, while he cultivates the vineyards of others: but watering, training, and pruning his own vines, let him teach by example, and distribute of his fruits among those who have less.

They soon learn the object of living, who thus labour to do good. They find that to enjoy God, is to enjoy everything worth possessing. And this glorious reward is not so much a gift as a result. It flows into the heart of him who has the great end of life in view; and when this life is ended, it becomes his joy for ever.—*N. Y. Observer.*

LITTLE ACTS.

Little acts are the elements of true greatness. They raise life's value, like the little figures over the larger ones in arithmetic, to its highest power. They are the tests of character and disinterestedness; they are the straws of life's deceitful current, that show the current's way. The heart comes all out in them. They move on the dial of character and responsibility, significantly. They indicate the character and destiny. They help to make the immortal man. It matters not so much where we are or what we are. It is seldom that acts of moral heroism are called for. Rather, the real heroism of life is, to do all its little duties promptly and faithfully.

HOW TO NOURISH THE SPIRIT OF PRAYER.

The power to walk in the Spirit is given by the Spirit; but either all have not this power, or all do not use it. I think rather it is that all have it not, for if they had it, a power so mighty and so beneficent, they surely could not help using it. All have it not; but I do not say that they all might not have it; on the contrary, all might have it, but in point of fact they have it not. They have it not because they seek it not; for an idle wish is one thing; a steady, persevering pursuit is another. They seek not the Spirit by the appointed means, the means of prayer and attending to God's holy Word, and thinking of life, and death, and judgment.

Do those seek the Spirit of God who never pray to God? Clearly they do not. For they who never pray to God never think of him; they who never think of him, by the very force of the terms, it follows that they cannot seek his help. And yet they say, "Oh, I wish to be good, but I cannot!"— But this, in the language of the Scripture, is a lie. If they did wish to be good, they would seek the help that could make them so. There is no boy so young as not to know that, when temptation is on him to evil, prayer to God will strengthen him for good. As sure as we live, if he wished really to overcome the temptation, he would seek the strength.

Consider what prayer is, and see how it cannot but strengthen us. He who stands in a sheltered place, where the wind cannot reach him, and with no branches over his head to cause a damp shade, and then holds up his face or his hands to the sun in his strength, can he help feeling the sun's warmth? Now, thus it is in prayer: we turn to God, we bring our souls, with all their thoughts and feelings, fully before him; and by the very act of so doing, we shelter ourselves from every chill of worldly care, we clear away every intercepting screen of worldly thought and pleasure. It is an awful thing so to submit ourselves wholly to the influence of God. But do it; and as surely as the sun will warm us if we stand in the sun, so will the Giver of light and life to the soul pour his Spirit of life into us; even as we pray, we become changed into his image.

This is not spoken extravagantly. I ask of any one who has ever prayed in earnest, whether, for that time, and while he was so praying, he did not feel as it were another man; a man able to do the things which he would; a man redeemed and free? But most true is it, that this feeling passes away but too soon, when the prayer is done. Still,

for the time, there is the effect; we know what it is to put ourselves, in a manner, beneath the rays of God's grace; but we do not abide there long, and then we feel the damp and the cold of earth again.

Therefore, says the apostle, "Pray without ceasing." If we could literally pray always, it is clear that we should sin never: it may be thus that Christ's redeemed at his coming, as they will be for ever with him and with the Father, can therefore sin no more. For where God is, there is no place left for sin.—But we cannot pray always; we cannot pray the greatest portion of our time; nay, we can pray, in the common sense of the term, only a very small portion of it. Yet, at least, we can take heed that we do pray sometimes, and that our prayer be truly in earnest.—We can pray then for God's help to abide with us when we are not praying; we can commit to his care, not only our hours of sleep, but our hours of worldly waking. "I have work to do, I have a busy world around me; eye, ear, and thought will be all needed for that work, done in and amidst that busy world; now, ere I enter upon it, I would commit eye, ear, thought, and wish to thee. Do thou bless them, and keep their work thine; that as, through thy natural laws, my heart bleeds and my blood flows without my thought for them, so my spiritual life may hold on its course, through thy help, at those times when my mind cannot consciously turn to thee, to commit each other thought to thy service."

But I dare not say that by any the most urgent prayers, uttered only at night and morning, God's blessing can thus be gained for the whole intervening day. For, in truth, if we did nothing more, the prayers would soon cease to be urgent; they would become formal—that is, they would be no prayers at all. For prayers, lives in the heart, and not in the mouth; it consists not of words, but wishes. And no man can set himself heartily to wish twice a-day for things, of which he never thinks at other times in the day. So that prayer requires in a manner to be fed, and its food is to be found in reading and thinking; in reading in God's Word, and in thinking about him, and about the world as being his work.

Young men and boys are generally, we know, not fond of reading for its own sake; and when they do read for their own pleasure, they naturally read something that interests them... Now, what are called serious books, including certainly the Bible, do not interest them, and therefore they are not commonly read. What shall we say, then? Are they not interested in becoming good, in learning to do the things which they would? If they

are not, if they care not for the bondage of sin, and death; there is of course, nothing to be said; then they are condemned already: they are not the children of God. But one says, "I wish I could find interest in a serious book, but I cannot." Observe again, "Ye cannot do the things that ye would," because the flesh and the spirit are contrary to one another. However, to return to him who says this, the answer to him is this—"The interest cannot come without the reading; it may, and will, come with it." For interest, in a subject depends very much on our knowledge of it; and so it is with the things of Christ. As long as the life and death of Christ are strange to us how can we be interested about them? But read them, thinking of what they were, and what were their ends; and who can help being interested about them? Read them carefully, and read them often, and they will bring before our minds the very thoughts which we need, and which the world keeps continually from us, the thoughts which naturally feed our prayers; thoughts not of self, nor selfishness, nor pleasure, nor passion, nor folly, but of such things as are truly God's—love, and self-denial, and purity, and wisdom. These thoughts come by reading the Scriptures; and strangely do they mingle at first with the common evil thoughts of our evil nature. But they soon find a home within us, and more good thoughts gather round them, and there comes a time when daily life with its various business, which once seemed to shut them out altogether, now ministers to their nourishment.

Wherefore in conclusion, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh; but do even the things which ye would.—And ye can walk in the Spirit, if ye seek for the Spirit; if ye seek him, by prayer, and by reading of Christ, and the things of Christ.—If we will do neither, then most assuredly we are not seeking him; if we seek him not, we shall never find him. If we find him not, we shall never be able to do the things that we would: we shall never be redeemed, never made free, but our souls shall be overcome by their evil nature, as surely as our bodies by their diseased nature, till one death shall possess us wholly, a death of body and of soul, the death of eternal misery.

CHRIST is the righteousness of all them that truly believe in Him. He for them paid their ransom by His death. He for them fulfilled the law in His life. So that now, in Him, and by Him, every true Christian may be called a fulfiller of the law; forasmuch as that which their infirmity lacked, Christ's justice hath supplied.

"The Weaker Vessel" Honoured.

Alas! how we run into extremes! One man makes a slave of his wife, another makes her his idol. To-day she is flattered, to-morrow oppressed. Heathenism *crushes* her, Mohammedanism *sensationalises* her, Romanism *deifies* her with the sovereignty of heaven; but the Scriptures keep us clear from such blasphemy and folly. What is due to the wife is neither idolatrous love, which a jealous God is sure to resent, nor cold neglect, which is as unmanly as it is unchristian; but that she be held in honorable esteem,—“giving honour to the wife as unto the weaker vessel.”

Honour her with your undying affection. You will meet with ingratitude and scorn enough from the world. What can your hearts find to love, if you look unkindly towards each other,—the objects of your settled choice, to whom, on your bended knee, you plighted your mutual vows, cemented, perhaps, by those living and lasting pledges of your wedded love, which are growing up “like olive-branches round about your table?” You love your children because they are part of yourselves; you love your wives because they are yourselves, for “he that loveth his wife loveth himself;” and no man—he is not a man, he is unworthy of the name—“ever hated his own flesh.”

Honour her by reposing confidence in her at home. Home is woman's proper sphere. She has not the look, the hand, the voice, to encounter the struggle of a disordered world. The public gaze of rude and wanton eyes was not meant for her. In the retirement of domestic life, administering the affairs of her household, moulding the minds and habits of her children, diffusing an air of cheerful contentment around her own fireside, ready to greet her husband with smiles of welcome when he returns from the toilsome cares of his daily lot; this is woman's proper element. Let her cultivate her graces there, and she will flourish. Let the poor man bring her his hard-earned wages, and show himself pleased with the comforts which her frugal economy makes them to yield; and let others confide in the discreet circumspection of their wives, without suspicion and without grudging.

But there is a higher honour due to her than this. It is right that you should honour her as your chosen companion for life; as the sharer of your trials, your pleasures, and your name; as the guardian of your interests, the dispenser of your comforts, and the mother of your offspring.—She is thus associated with you in all that is honourable on earth. But, honourable as marriage is, if it has been “marriage in the Lord,” your wife is associated with you in a more honorable career than this, in which you are fellow-travellers to the same kingdom—comrades fighting side by side in the same conflict, and heirs together of the same unfading inheritance. Therefore, honour her, by frequently kneeling together in prayer. If you are heirs together of the grace of life, you will be pleaders together at the Father's throne. No soul quickened to life by God the Holy Ghost can live without prayer. Married persons have special need to give themselves unto prayer. If, by disregarding this duty, you neglect God, He will assuredly neglect you. Domestic happiness is a tender plant, it grows but slowly in this unkind world. But there are proofs in many, many Christian households, that God can make it grow. But God's blessing is given in answer to His people's prayers. None need to pray with more unwearied supplication than husbands and wives. God can touch you in many ways. How entirely dependent you are upon God's blessing in your worldly affairs! “The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it” (Prov. x. 22.) Pray that He may sanctify your comforts and your crosses. His smile can gladden life's darkest scene; His frown can wither life's gayest prospect. If you are joint heirs of an inheritance above, go often thither in spirit, taking sweet counsel together at the throne of grace; let your souls breathe freely in that heavenly element; feast in faith and hope on the things, unseen and unimagined, which God has laid up for you there. Cultivate the habit of much prayer. It is not enough that you pray morning and evening in your family,—that of course you do,—but pray with one another. It will obtain strength for your duties, and comfort in your trials. It will secure His abiding

presence whose favour is better than life, and lasting as eternity. It will keep far away from your dwelling the jar of discord, or the frown of discontent. It will consecrate your abode as the house of God; and while the dwellings of others are lighted up for glitter and vanity, and resound with the harp, the tabret, and viol, your peaceful habitation will be like the upper room at Jerusalem,—the selected spot in which Jesus loved to visit and bless His disciples, where trouble was turned into gladness, and dark clouds melted into sunshine and joy.—*Rev. W. B. Mackenzie, M.A.*

A STRIKING ARGUMENT.

“Every transgression of *physical* law meets penalty, does it not?”

“Yes.”

“There is no pardon, then, for such transgression?”

“No.”

“Is there a radical difference between transgressing physical and transgressing moral laws?”

“No, I suppose not.”

“Well, then, if God pardons the transgression of moral laws, what *becomes of the penalty?*”

“This was all. I could not answer it. It would not do to say that the penalty is cancelled by God's pardon, for such a system would introduce anarchy into the universe at once; it would either imply that God does not rule by law, but only by advice, or it would introduce the absurdity of naming that law which has no penalty, whereas it is the very essence of law that penalty is the award of its transgression. It was plain that any temporal ruler who should dispense with penalty on the mere ground that offenders confess their wrongdoing and beg for pardon, would unseat his rule at once. Such questions as the above lodged in the mind, must lead in time to the acceptance of mercy through Christ, who bore the penalty of sin ‘in his body on the tree.’ And though I did not come to the great idea of substitution at once yet here was a help at any rate. It opened my eyes to the fact that the evangelical scheme is worthy of study; that it meets sturdy difficulties, and looks them in the face.”

ON THE DUTY OF AVOIDING TEMPTATION.

An angel, perhaps, does not need to be warned against the exposure of himself to temptation, for there may be no ingredient in his constitution that can be at all affected by it; but not so with man, compounded as he is, and made up as his constitution is here of two great departments, one of which is prone to evil, and that continually; and in the other of which lie all those principles and powers whose office it is, if not utterly to extinguish this proneness, at least to repress its outbursts. In these circumstances, it is assuredly not for man to thrust himself into a scene of temptation; and when the alternative is at his own will whether he shall shun the encounter or shall dare it, his business is to shun, and the whole of Scripture is on the side of cautiousness rather than of confidence in this matter; and we may be assured that it is our part, in every case, to expose nothing, and to hazard nothing, unless there be a call of duty, which is tantamount to a call of Providence. When the trial is of our own bringing on we have no warrant to hope for a successful issue. God will grant succour and support against the onsets which temptation maketh upon us, but He does not engage Himself to stand by us in the presumptuous onsets which we make upon temptation. We better consult the mediocrity of our powers, and better suit our habits to the real condition of our mind and adulterated nature, when we keep, as far as in us lies, our *determined* distance from every allurements—when with all our might we restrain our tendencies to evil within from coming into contact with the excitements to evil that are without—when we make a covenant with our eyes to turn them away from the sight of vanity; and whether the provocation be to anger, or evil speaking, or *intemperance*, or any wayward and vicious indulgence whatever, let us be assured that we cannot be too prompt in our alarms, or too early in our measures, whether of prevention or resistance; and that in every one instance where we have it in our power, and no dereliction of duty is implied, it is our wise and salutary part, not most resolutely to face the provocation, but most resolutely to flee from it.—*Chalmers.*

TO OUR CHRISTIAN FRIENDS,

With the close of eighteen hundred and sixty-four, another year of our evangelistic enterprise will have ended. It is now about six years since we commenced, in a very humble way, the publication of "The Evangelizer," since which we have continued to issue it monthly, and have added a few other publications of a kindred character:

The religious publications that now periodically issue from our office are:—THE GOOD NEWS, THE GLAD TIDINGS, THE EVANGELIZER, and THE MONTHLY MESSENGER, the united circulation of which is equal to about *five hundred thousand pages of tract matter* in the month—an amount which we understand considerably exceeds the issue of all the Tract Societies in Canada. This amount of religious reading scattered over the land must, with the blessing of God, be an important means along with the other instrumentalities at work, of leavening the community with the gospel.

This circulation is mainly among subscribers to one or other of the periodicals, whose subscriptions are voluntarily sent in to the office, or solicited by our travelling agents; but also among individuals who are too poor or too careless to procure such reading, and who receive gratuitously from our office through distributors.

The evangelical character of our publications is now generally known in Canada, and the best evidence of their catholicity is the fact that they circulate extensively among members of every Christian denomination. We can advocate their claims to general support on the ground of their character, on their being published in Canada, and on their freedom from secular intelligence or advertisements, as specially adapted for Sabbath reading; but the particular grounds on which we would plead for special sympathy and support are—

(1.) The agency which we have employed in bringing our periodicals before the public. The longer we continue in this work, the more satisfied we are that this is a most important thing for the country. The gospel requires to be supplied before a demand exist; and for this purpose it is as necessary that agents should travel with periodicals and books as with the Bible. This agency we have endeavoured to employ extensively, by engaging respectable and pious young men on salary and on commission. Through their instrumentality, our publications have entered thousands of families, into which they would not have entered without such an instrumentality; but the agency is expensive and its control laborious and difficult.

(2.) *The gratuitous distribution.* Ever since we began to publish we have given away a large number of "Evangelizers," for distribution in localities destitute of the gospel, or to people too poor or too careless to purchase such reading.

This gratuitous circulation has amounted to the value of about *four thousand four hundred dollars*, to aid in which we have received a little more than *sixteen hundred dollars*. The disparity between our receipts and the value of our expenditure is so great, that we have often been sorely discouraged, and our usefulness both cramped and confined.

We do not think it too much to ask the Christian public who may read this statement, to aid in reducing this balance. There is no benevolent enterprise in Canada conducted with the same vigour and efficiency, that costs the community so little. We give our own services in conducting it, without charge, and though we preach the gospel as frequently as most of our ministerial brethren, we receive no salary, or no remuneration for it. We have no agents for collecting donations to whom large salaries have to be paid; and though we

are quite willing to be out of pocket besides, we are not willing that our energies or usefulness should be interfered with.

We have for some time set our heart upon procuring a steam-press and some additional type. Our present press and type are about worn out, and we cannot do long as they are. We need at the least a thousand dollars to procure what we require. If we borrowed that sum we would never be able to pay it, so that if we get them at all, it must be through the donations of those whom the Lord stirs up to help us.

There is a work to be done, and but a short time to do it. We have had many co-workers since we commenced this enterprise, but very many are already in the world of spirits. We too, and you also, reader, will soon be numbered amongst the dead: let us therefore co-operate together in the work of the Lord. Let us work while it is called to-day, for the night cometh, when no man can work.

BE NEAR ME.

Be near me, Lord, my light and stay,
When fears and doubts perplex my way;
Be near me, when the tempter's wile
Plies craftily my own heart's guile;
As sunlight breaks through clouds and rain,
Be near me in my grief and pain.

I know Thou art not far, O Lord,
From him who walketh by Thy word;
I know 'tis but the cloud of sin
That hides Thee from my heart within;
I know Thou dost not veil Thy face
From him who trusts Thy plenteous grace.

But Lord, my flesh doth faint and fail;
My weak heart sinks; my fears prevail;
Mine eye grows dim; I cannot see
The Presence that is life to me;
Hold me, O Lord, that I may know
Thou still art near me here below.

For without Thee, my Christ, my Lord,
I find no joy even in Thy Word,
No promise that is clear to me,
No strength, or hope, or victory;
But all is darkness, doubt, and fear.
In heaven and earth, till Thou art near.

Be near me, Lord, that I may see
At once with all my cares to Thee;
And when the traitor thought within
Would parley with the lust of sin,
Thy strength unto my weakness bring,
And keep the fortress for its King.

— Good Words.

INDUSTRY IN A PREACHER.

Industriousness lies at the base of pulpit power. We use it here as equivalent to hard study. Ordination does not bring omniscience. The pulpit has no magic to infuse wisdom, and previous culture is not a stock for a lifetime. One may have a transient popularity without study, but the cistern soon runs out, and the people soon get tired of driveling and sentiment. It is too late now to talk of God's helping those who do not help themselves. Though he made the beast of Balaam to speak, he will not countenance men in laziness. If he does not need our wisdom, he certainly does not our stupidity. It is an insult to God to go idly up and down all the week (or all but Saturday), and then on Sabbath bring an offering to the Lord "which costs nothing," "the blind, the lame, the sick," "a corrupt thing for sacrifice," and ask God's blessing on it. How can such preaching have power? "Give attention to reading; study to show thyself approved," says Paul. Without this, a Samson in native talent will soon lose his locks. A strong preacher must keep his mental powers in working order. He must be a man of rigid, unremitting diligence. He must plough, and cross plough, and subsoil his own mind, that it may yield nourishment to other minds.

CLEAVING TO CHRIST.

I have seen a heavy piece of solid iron hanging on another, not welded, not linked, not glued to the spot, and yet it cleaved with such tenacity as to bear not only its own weight but mine too, if I chose to seize and hang upon it. A wire charged with an electric current is in contact with its mass, and hence its adhesion. Cut that wire through, or remove it by a hair's breadth, and the piece of iron drops dead to the ground, like any other unsupported weight.

A stream of life from the Lord, brought into contact with a human spirit keeps the spirit cleaving to the Lord so firmly that no power on earth or hell can wrench the two asunder. From Christ the mysterious life-stream flows, through the being of a disciple it spreads, and to the Lord it returns again. In that circle the feeblest Christian is held safely, but if the circle be broken the dependent spirit instantly drops off.

The Little Pond in the Rock.

The cool drops of a summer shower fell copiously on a small rocky island in the Pacific Ocean. There were no corn fields on it to water, no pastures to keep green for cattle, no fruits to nourish, no roots to feed for man or beast, and yet this shower fell as abundantly, and the rain drops pattered as joyfully, as if it had the great grain-fields of the nation to fit for the harvest, and the farmer's blessing to follow it.

And as the rain fell, it trickled down to a low place among the rocks, and made a rude pond there, clear, pure, beautiful and sparkling. No little dog lapped it, no cows came to drink there, no wild beast slaked its thirst there; perhaps a stray sea-bird dipped in its bill, and then took wing, leaving the little pond all by itself alone. And could we have seen it we might have said, "Ah, useless little pond, why are you here?" and thinking a moment longer, have added, "Well, you will soon dry up. No matter; nobody sees you; nothing is the better for you." But when we think and say so, we leave out God. God saw the little pond. He formed it; he delighted in it; and had a purpose in it. It was as much a part of his great plan in making the universe as you and I are.

The *Townsend*, a brave ship, is ploughing its watery way to California. It is loaded with coal. Her voyage is almost over. They are within a few weeks of San Francisco.

"Is it not stinging-hot on ship-board?" said the second mate one morning.

"Hot weather, sir," answered a sailor.

These decks have an unnatural heat, thought the second mate. He ran to the ventilators, which let in air to the hold of the ship, and a stream of hot air nearly suffocated him. Hurrying to the captain, "Sir," said he, "the ship's on fire!"

An examination was instantly made. The coal had ignited, and sure enough the ship was on fire from stem to stern.

The horrors of such a situation on mid-ocean, who can describe? Two boats, manned and provisioned, put to sea with the crew, escaping for their lives. The ship was soon one mass of flame, and at last nothing was seen but her smoking hulk hissing in the water. The sea was rough,

and on the second day one of the boats capsized. The poor sailors were picked up by the other boat, in which twenty-four men now found shelter, and close quarters it was.

For fourteen days and ten hours they were tossed on the wild ocean; water gone, provisions gone, all but a little salt junk.

"Water, water, water!" was the agonizing cry.

On the fifteenth day a small island hove in sight. They made for it, and drifting into a little cove, climbed out upon the rocks; but so cramped, so wet, so weak were they, they could scarcely drag themselves up its shaggy sides. When at last they did, what sight rewarded their exertions? Water, water, pure water, fresh water, sparkling water. It was the little pond in a hollow of the rocks. They ran to it, they rolled themselves to it, and falling down, plunged in their parched lips and drank. Health, strength, hope were in every draught. They blessed it, they wept over it, they thanked God for it, and more, they had a meal by it. Some of the sailors picked the green leaves of a tropical plant which grew in the crevices of the rocks; others, ranging the shore for drift-wood to make a fire with, found on the beach an old boat bottom up. Turning it over, what should they see but two skeletons of some poor, shipwrecked sailors like themselves cast on its desolate shores. Filling a kettle, they boiled the salt junk and greens together, and made a soup for supper. O, how good it tasted.

Then did they lie down to sleep?

"No," said Captain Wooderson, "not till we all fill our kegs and kettles with the water."

Why not put it off till to-morrow? But it was impressed upon the captain's mind to do it then, and everything that could hold water was filled. The tired men threw themselves on the rocks and went to sleep, nor did they wake till the sun was high up in the sky next morning. Waking up, they found the water in the hollow of the rock had gone. The little pond had vanished.

It was the Sabbath. Some of the crew wanted to take the boat and start off again.

"No," said the captain, "God is here. The God who gave us water out of the

rock is God of the Sabbath. We will rest on this island to-day, and honor him."

So they did, and the next day, on the strength of what God had done for them, they pushed off from the rocky island to pursue their lonely voyage, where they hardly knew.

Before two days another island hove in sight. It proved to be Juan Fernández, where Robinson Crusoe was once cast away. But they found things in a better condition for them than in Crusoe's day. The British government now keeps a depot of supplies there for shipwrecked mariners, and the poor sailors on landing found a hearty welcome—food, clothing, shelter, and a doctor, which some of them by this time were in sore need of.

"Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he brought them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then they are glad because they be quiet; so he brought them into a desired haven. O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men." (Ps. cvii.)

LEGAL THIEVING.

There is many a man who, if he makes a bargain with another man, and finds that that man has made about as much by the transaction as he has, is sorry, and says, "O, if I had only known." What would he have done? He would have driven the bargain tighter, and tried to make it so that it would have been profitable at one end. In other words, he would have tried to be a thief; for a man that makes a bargain so that the profit shall be all at his end, is a thief. No bargain is right where there is no profit at both ends. If you are expert enough to choose a man—which is only another name for cheat—to get the advantage of him in a bargain, you are expert enough to be dishonest. And no bargain is a good bargain that is not equitable, and equally beneficial to both parties. But many men, when they find that those with whom they have been dealing have made about as much as they, feel somehow as though God's law had been broken, and that they ought to have

made pretty much all that was made. A man buys a piece of property to-day, and sells it to-morrow so as to make five thousand dollars. He learns that the man who bought it of him sold it the next day so as to make three or four thousand dollars more; and his first thought is, "If I had held on to it, I should have made that." These mean souls are sorry to have anybody else prosper by anything that they have anything to do with. They would like it if the whole world was one breast, and they were the only ones to suck it! They would like it if they were the Mississippi, and other men's prosperities were streams emptying into it. If they could have their own way, they would be the channel through which the torpid waters of universal prosperity should run down into the gulf of destruction. Many men, greedy, greedy, greedy, never measure what they make by any honesty of their own, nor by any moral standard, but only by their insane desire for more, and more, and more. And not only that, they are always sorry if anybody else is prosperous. How detestable is that nature which allies these men to the devil! And how utterly opposite is it to the Divine nature; or to a manly Christian nature, which makes one more glad when another prospers than when he himself prospers!

A RELIGION OF FOUR LETTERS.

"There is a wide difference between your religion and mine," said a Christian lady to one in whose spiritual condition she had long been interested. "Indeed," said he, "how is that?" "Your religion," she replied, "has only two letters in it, and mine has four."

It seems that this gentleman was one of that numerous class who are seeking to get to heaven by their doings, by attention to ordinances and ceremonies, by what the apostle, in the ninth of Hebrews, terms "dead works." But he did not understand about the 'two letters' and the 'four.' His friend had often spoken to him, and on the occasion to which our anecdote refers, she had called to take her leave of him for some time, as she was about to go from home.

"What do you mean," said he, "by two letters and four?" "Why your religion," said the lady, "is D-O, DO; whereas mine is D-O-N-E, DONE." This was all that passed. The lady took her leave; but her words remained and did their work in the soul of her friend—a revolutionary work verily. The entire current of his thoughts was changed. *Do* is one thing; *done* is quite another. The former is legalism; the latter is Christianity. It was a novel and very original mode of putting the gospel; but it was just the mode for a legalist, and the Spirit of God used it in the conversion of this gentleman. When next he met his friend, he said to her, "Well, I can now say, with you, that my religion is d-o-n-e, DONE." He had learned to fling aside his deadly doings, and rest in the finished work of Christ. He was led to see that it was no longer a question of what he could *do* for God, but of what God had *done* for him.

This settled everything. The four golden letters shone under the gaze of his emancipated soul, "D-O-N-E." Precious letters! Precious word! Who can tell the relief to a burdened heart when it discovers that all is *done*? What joy to know that what I have been toiling for, it may be many a long year, was all done, over eighteen hundred years ago, on the cross! Christ has done *all*. He has put away sin—magnified the law and made it honorable—satisfied the claims of divine justice—vanquished Satan—taken the sting from death and the victory from the grave—glorified God in the very scene in which He had been dishonoured—brought in everlasting righteousness. All this is wrapped up in these four golden letters, "D-O-N-E." O, who would not give up the two for the four? Who would not exchange "do," for "d-o-n-e?"

Reader, what say you to this? What of your religion? Does it consist of two letters or four? Is it still "d-o" with you? Or have you found your happy portion and rest in "d-o-n-e?" Do think of it, dear friend—think deeply—think seriously, and may God's Spirit lead you, this moment, to cease from your own "d-o," and to rest in Christ's eternal "D-O-N-E!"

Ques.—"What must I do to be saved?"

Ans.—"Nothing either great or small,
Nothing, sinner, no;
Jesus did it, did it ALL;
Long, long ago.

"When He, from His lofty throne,
Stooped to do and die,
Everything was fully done,
Hearken to His cry—

"IT IS FINISHED!" Yes, indeed,
Finished every jot.
Sinner, this is all you need;
Tell me, is it not?

"O! thou trembling, anxious one,
Wherefore toil you so?
All was finished; all was DONE,
Long, long ago.

"Till to Jesus' work you cling
By a simple faith,
'Doing' is a deadly thing—
'Doing' ends in death.

"Cast thy deadly doings down,
Down at Jesus' feet;
Stand in Him—in Him alone,
Gloriously complete."

A WORKING CHRISTIAN.

A quarter of a century ago, there was a man in this city who had what Paysan calls "a passion for souls." Although a layman (a book keeper), he felt it alike his duty and his pleasure to labour to bring impenitent sinners to Christ. Two things in particular characterized him. He was a *man of prayer*. He spent hours every day in his closet; and often, when in the crowded street, it was evident to them that knew him that he was even then and there wrestling for souls. The other trait was his *self-denial for others*. He obtained from his employer the use of two, half-days every week to himself, at a drawback from his salary of more than a hundred dollars. This time he used in visiting from house to house for religious conversation.

Of course, such a man would leave his mark. And he did. His Sabbath-school class of twenty-five young girls all became hopeful converts. And it was a regular thing at each communion season of the church to which he belonged, to find from one to five applicants for admission, brought there through his instrumentality. And, indeed, when the sacramental season occurred without there being any such seal of God's blessing upon his labours, he was sadly distressed and disappointed.

Were there but one such man, now in each church of our city, what a blessed result would follow? Yet why should there not be? Is not every believer bound to toil for the conversion of souls? Should not every disciple, male or female, old or young, make this one especial, nay, prominent object in life?

HEARERS AND DOERS.

"Owe no man anything."—Rom. xiii. 8.

"Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, to-morrow I will give; when thou hast it by thee."—Prov. iiii. 25.

The clock had just struck nine. The family are rising from the breakfast table. A ring at the door-bell! The servant enters.

"Sir, a young man, Mr. A.'s clerk, has called, and hopes you will not be offended, but would feel particularly obliged if you could settle his account. He called twice last week. He would not trouble you if it were not a case of necessity."

"Necessity, or no necessity, I have not one minute to spare," replied the gentleman with a shrug of his shoulders, whilst giving the last pull to his great-coat as he was putting it on. "I am going by the next train, so bid him call again."

This gentleman was not upon the whole an unfeeling man; but, carried on by the spirit of the times—railway speed—he too often did not allow himself time to reflect, or to put himself in the place of his fellow-man. Had he in this instance troubled himself to think, he would have seen that he had just a few minutes to spare, and still would have been in time for the train: but even had it been otherwise, his duty was too plain to be mistaken. A neglected debt had prior claim to the commercial concerns to which he was hastening.

The clerk turned sorrowfully from the house: he knew that on the payment of that money his employer's continuance in business depended, and consequently his own dismissal was involved in this refusal. Mr. A.'s family was large, his receipts were small, and in reliance on this sum he had promised to meet a heavy bill that day: he was now unable to do so. The traveller to whom he owed it, was a hasty,

harsh-judging man; Mr. A. could expect to find no favour, nor did he. Here then, was a whole household, besides those in their employ, thrown into distress by that fatal sentence—"I have not a minute to spare." And yet, those who caused that distress were not altogether regardless of the forms of religion. They were in the custom of having family prayer, and of reading daily from that Word where it is written, "*Owe no man anything.*"

This gentleman's wife, an hour after her husband's departure, was stopped as she was leaving the parlour, by her maid, who said, "There is a poor woman who wishes to speak to you."

"Who is she, what is she?"

"I don't know, ma'am, but she particularly wishes to see you."

"Tell her I can't possibly see her now: I have not a minute to spare; my children are waiting for me in the nursery."

"Alas!" thought the poor woman, "I too have children: it is for my child I want to see her." She went heart-broken from that door.

The next day, that lady heard that the poor woman who had called upon her the day before had lost her child; and that the doctor had said, the child's life to all appearance might have been saved, had she used the means prescribed. That mother could not! she had spent her last shilling; and this was her last application of three calls she had made, and from each house she had been turned away with words to the same effect.

Is it, can it be, that a child must be left to die, and a mother's best feelings to wither, and by one, too, who so far professes the Christian religion as to read the Bible in her family,—that Bible, where it is written, "*Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and to-morrow I will give; when thou hast it by thee!*"—This lady had the habit of giving people the trouble to call twice, when once should have sufficed. She would not put herself out of the way in order to meet the convenience of others. In setting too high a value on her own time, she forgot that the time of others was of equal and often of greater value. Whilst she was finishing a chapter in some interesting book, a pattering in needle-work, or a note she was writing

she would keep a dressmaker waiting, or send away a tradesman's servant, forgetting that to them "Tin" is money," — nay, their very bread.

THE MAN WITH THE LANTERN.

A CLERGYMAN was called from home on a mission of mercy: the case was urgent; a dangerous march must be crossed, which it was impossible to reach before nightfall, and he could hardly expect to pass over in the darkness, unharmed. But he recognized the call as imperative; the love of Christ constrained him, and casting all his care upon the heavenly Friend, he pushed on through the gloom. Urging his horse along the dangerous pathway, he at length reached a frightful point in his perilous journey; the darkness was profound; a single misstep might be fatal; and for an instant, he paused!

At that moment a light appeared; nearer and nearer it came. What could it betoken in that lonely, uninhabited spot? Directly a stranger came in sight, bearing a lantern, and courteously guided the benighted minister to a place of safety.

"And thus," said the man of God, "have I ever found it through life; when all has been enveloped in gloom, and in no way could I extricate myself, 'a man with a lantern' has come to my aid."

God has said, "Let there be light."

A MISSIONARY when pressed by poverty and want, was in the habit of specifying in prayer his special need. One day, potatoes, meal, and salt were all lacking. Nothing could be hoped from the "subscription;" some church-members living at a distance would doubtless bring relief; if the necessities of the case could be laid before them, but that was impossible. Prayer was their only refuge, and He who feedeth the ravens heard their cry.

Next morning a rough, swearing man, living miles away, came driving his team through the bushes; presently stopping, he tossed some bags into the grass, saying,—

"There's a trifle for you babies; *that's* a bag of potatoes, the other is meal, and at the end of the sack you'll find a few pounds of salt; perhaps you'll smile when I tell you I had a queer notion that I must

put that in, if you don't need it, it won't do any harm."

Who would have thought this messenger would have come "with the lantern"? Answers to prayer often reach us through unexpected instrumentalities.

SICKNESS on the frontier! Ah! the terror of that thought, — an entire family prostrated, and none to help! Thus it was one autumn with the Kesters; first the parents, then the children; the former, rallying, bent over the wasted forms of their little ones, in great weakness watching them through long nights and sultry days until, exhausted, they could watch no more, and sinking upon the floor, besought the Lord to send them a friend.

Morning broke, and with it came an answer to their petition, in the person of one least expected or desired, and who, under happier circumstances, would have been greeted coldly; little did they know that under that repulsive manner throbbed a tender heart.

"I could not sleep last night," said the neighbor, "I was so troubled about you; and now if you can put up with my rough ways, I should like to help you."

And what a help that strong-armed woman was, as she tenderly arranged the sick ones upon freshly-made beds, and laid their aching heads upon smooth, sweet pillows!

Ah, she was a messenger with a lantern, and verily the place grew beautifully "light about her."

Dear reader, let us not only pray that in our hours of darkness a messenger with a lantern may come to us, but that we, in our turn, may bear to the benighted and tempest tossed his cheering rays.

LOVE FOR SOULS A TRUE TEST OF A RENEWED HEART.

Years ago, and in a parish which I knew, there lived a woman notorious in the neighbourhood for profane swearing, habits of drunkenness, and manners rude; course, as well as irreligious. She feared not God; neither regarded man; and trained up her children for the devil. One evening she happened to be within ear-

shot of a preacher; and, as he was emptying his quiver among the crowd, an arrow from the bow drawn at a venture, was lodged in her heart. Remarkable example of free, sovereign, subduing grace!—She was converted. Her case, as much that of the thief on the cross, of the jailer at Philippi, of Saul on his way to Damascus, was one of instant conversion—day burst on her soul without a dawn. She hastened home. She found her family asleep, and saw in each child a never-dying soul, that her own hand had rocked into deeper, fatal slumbers. Seized with an intense desire to have them saved, she could not delay the matter till to-morrow, and so rushing on the sleepers as if the bed beneath them had been in flames, she shook them, woke them, crying, Arise, call upon thy God! And there at the midnight hour, with her children kneeling round her, her eyes streaming with tears, her voice trembling with emotion, did that poor mother cry to God, that he would have mercy also on them, and pluck these brands from the burning.

Near by the dwelling where the mother roused her children from their beds to flee, not from a house on fire, but from the fire that is never quenched, stood the cottage of one whose joy over a converted sinner carried us away to the heavens, where angels rejoice over one sinner that repenteth. He had long been a Christian; not so his wife, from whose side he had often stolen in the dead of night to pray for her salvation. He continued instant in prayer. Mothers, sisters, all who carry others in their prayers to the throne of grace, pray on! God's time to answer—the time to favour her at length came.—She was smitten; seized with anxiety; pierced with convictions; but she could find no peace. She walked in darkness, and had no light, and giving herself up for lost, once said, for instance, when her husband and she had lain down for sleep. If you should die before to-morrow, it will be happy for you; if I should, farewell, an everlasting farewell—I shall open my eyes in torment. But the time of her redemption drew nigh. She had sown in tears, and was to reap in joy. A minister hearing of her distress, came to visit her. She was in the garden. Her husband left the

house to call her. Who seeks me? she asked. Without forethought, as if the words had fallen from heaven on his lips he replied, Jesus Christ, seeks you! She started; an ashy paleness overspread her face; and, deeply affected, she followed him in silence to the house. There the man of God held up before her a bleeding, loving, dying Saviour. Prayer followed and praise followed prayer; for when they entreated God, with strong crying and tears the grave opened, and she that was dead came forth, to say, I confess that Jesus is the Lord, and to sing with Mary, "My soul doth magnify the Lord; and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour; for he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden—He that is mighty hath done to me great things, and holy is his name." And what did you do? I asked the husband. Do, sir? he replied; I sprung to my feet; I clasped her in my arms; I exclaimed, This is our marriage day! and unable to restrain my joy, I cried Hosanna to the Son of David! Praise him, all ye his angels; praise him, sun, moon and stars; praise him, all ye orbs of light!

By their fruits ye shall know them.—Grapes do not grow on thorns, nor figs on thistles—nor such fruits in any but renewed hearts. So to feel, proves what no profession can, that the same mind is in us that was in Jesus Christ; nor is there room to doubt that if you bear such saintly and heavenly fruit, you are one with him who, communicating the influences of the Spirit to his people, as the tree does its sap to the boughs, hath said, I am the Vine, ye are the branches. Abide in me, and I in you.—*Speaking to the Heart.*

Suffering.

There is a great want about Christians who have not suffered. Some flowers must be broken or bruised before they emit fragrance. All the wounds of Christ sent out sweetness; all the sorrows of Christians do the same. Commend to me a bruised brother—a broken reed—ones like the Son of Man. To me there is something sacred and sweet in all suffering; it is so much akin to the Man of Sorrows,

Sabbath School Lessons.

December 25th, 1864.

WE WOULD SEE JESUS.

John xii. 20-36.

Those who made the request. These were not Greek Jews—Jews speaking Greek—as some have supposed, though there were many such. But these were Gentiles who were accustomed to worship not only their own gods, but the gods of the city or region into which they had come. They also brought offerings to Jerusalem, and frequently attended the great feasts of the Jews. Hence, there was in the temple the court of the Gentiles, so called by appointment of Solomon, 1 Kings viii. 41.

Of whom the request was made. It was of Philip. Why they came to Philip is not stated. It may have been because they knew he was from Galilee. These Galileans had heard of Christ, and perhaps had seen something of His triumphal entry at Jerusalem, and were led by curiosity, as Zaccheus, or by desire to learn something more of Him, to make this inquiry.

How their request was treated. Philip told Andrew, and they both told Jesus. It is not said whether the Greeks were admitted to converse with Jesus, but it seems probable that these words were spoken to Philip and Andrew in reply, and in the hearing of the strangers and of the disciples. The answer of Jesus was suggested by the appealing of these Gentiles. The hour was come for the glorification of Christ, and this was connected with the conversion of the Gentiles. He rejoiced in spirit, and before his audience he discoursed of the solemn events that were about to occur to prepare the way.

• Observe—1. Those who seek Christ must enquire of his word and people, and use the proper means, ver. 21.

2. The death of Christ was necessary to the design and glory of his kingdom, ver. 24.

3. The same Divine law applies to the disciples as well as to the Master. His kingdom

was to be carried on by their instrumentality, and only as they submitted to self-sacrifice would they attain to everlasting life and glory, ver. 25.

4. That the "lifting up" of Christ would draw all classes of men and of operations to himself. Thus the attractions of the cross are varied and powerful.

A SECRET FOR MOTHERS!

Mr. and Mrs. Ashton, with their numerous family of sons and daughters, came to the Lord's table an unbroken circle. I never witnessed the blessed sight without asking myself, "What secret family influence has been owned of God by these precious results?" One day I said to the youngest daughter, a child of twelve years, "Do you ever forget Jesus?" "Oh no!" she replied, "we can none of us at home ever forget Him; for mother speaks to us of Jesus every day. He is ever with us." O mothers, take to your hearts the precious secret of that family's bliss. The mother, ever abiding in Jesus, made his name a household word. His presence ever acknowledged, ever felt.

"She speaks to us of Jesus every day!" Mother is it true of you? Do your lips and life daily, hourly breathe the knowledge and love of Jesus into the hearts of the little ones at your knee? Is *Jesus* a name which your baby often hears, and early lisps? Trust not that formal counsels, invitations, and prayers will be owned and blessed of God in the salvation of your children. The ever-abiding, ever-pleading, out-breathing, out-speaking love of Jesus alone shall prevail. Giving yourself, and your little ones, unto God to be saved by the blood of Jesus alone, according to his everlasting covenant to you and to your children, trust him unwaveringly to keep his word. So shall you be sustained in your work of Christian nurture, not alone by hope and faith, but by the blessed assurance that God will make your labours effectual unto salvation, by his converting and saving grace.—*British Messenger.*

KEEPING IN TUNE.

Why do we often sit down to our class on Sundays, so utterly spiritless to teach? Why do we look around so coldly on immortal souls going the broad way that leads to death? Why, when we speak to them of a Saviour's love is there often no thrill of gratitude, no joyful emotion in our souls, or in our voices? Or when school is over and we meet one another in friendly intercourse, why the lack of love and warmth which should kindle through every Christian recognition. Why do we pass on to our homes, no better for having met, without one word of sympathy or counsel, perhaps without the look, the smile, which may speak so plainly, to carry back the glad remembrance? Ah! here lies the secret, we are *not in tune*. Perhaps, too, we were not in tune for prayer before we left our homes, when we knelt and could not feel the presence of God, or the holy peace of those who 'hold communion with the skies.' Then we arose, with our urn still unfiled with the pure water we tried to seek, and we mingled with minor things over again, weak and thirsty as before.—Might not the explanation be that we had striven to meet the Lord with a heart untuned?—a thing, as impossible and unreasonable to expect, as to draw forth sweet airs and harmony from a harp neglected and unprepared. Let us go farther back still, and ask in honest scrutiny were we ready for the sabbath? How far did its dawn find us in a state of mind suiting its hallowed employments?—like the man who could say 'My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord.' We cannot answer these things, but we sadly admit the explanation of what has sometimes appeared strange and unacceptable. We have not lived within sight of the city we are going to, we have been walking in parts remote from the kingdom to which we are bound, as Pilgrim felt when he was fanned by the pleasant air of the land of Zoulah, and caught glimpses of the light of the Celestial City. Would that heart and life were more in that land which is the border ground of heaven.

One who was well acquainted with the sainted Hewitson, remarked, 'One thing about him made a forcible impression upon

me. He seemed to have no gaps,—no intervals in his communion with God.' His was the holy aptitude for service which can only result from much and ceaseless traffic between our souls and heaven.—This has been the life of all those who have been the most distinguished in holy zeal and the richest in good works. They have realized the necessity of keeping in tune. 'It is harder,' says Gurnall, 'to get the great bell up, than to ring it when it is raised; and so it is with our hearts; harder work we shall find it to prepare them for duty than to perform it when they get into some order.'

'But alas!' says one, 'I am incapable of such a close walk with God; those of whom you write were the strong ones, and alas! I am a 'weak' one, and compassed with infirmities. I cannot thus keep up a constant walk with him, a perpetual readiness to serve him. Which of us Christians does not feel ready to say the same? Which of *them* did not? Well we feel it is so; well if such a consciousness sends us to the 'Strong for strength,' and makes us even glory in weakness, and 'glory in infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon us—if it drive us with more fervent longing to that blessed Spirit, who helpeth our infirmities, and who alone can reveal to us the exceeding riches of grace and strength that are treasured up for us in Jesus.

Oh! seek his aid then, that your heart may be as an instrument ready tuned at all times, and though you may be often sad for its untunefulness, and troubled that you send forth such feeble music; while you seek each day to raise a holier, sweeter strain, take comfort in the enlivening hope that ere long you shall praise him better, love him more; that God is only *trying* your strings, as it were, below, sounding one here and there to see how far his work has progressed, fashioning you for future use and sinless service, when not one missing string, or one discordant note will grieve him again. 'The glory that shall be revealed in us, eye hath not seen, neither hath ear heard.'

Sunday-school teachers, let us see to it that, till that day comes, we lose not precious opportunities and precious souls through being *out of tune*. May God

teach us all how short the time is, and
 'make us more ready to join that united
 voice of praise, that 'voice from heaven
 as the voice of many waters, and as the
 voice of great thunder, and the voice of
 harpers harping with their hearts' that
 'new song which no man could learn, but
 the hundred and forty and four thousand
 which were redeemed from the earth.'—
Eng. Magazine.

THE BYGONE YEAR.

A year, another year has fled;
 Its issues who can tell?
 Millions of voices from the dead
 Reply from heaven or hell.

All those were living at the birth
 Of the departed year;
 They all have vanished from the earth,
 We fill their places here.

Though to the eye, the mind
 Of man their speech is sealed
 The eternal meaning each may find
 In two plain words revealed:

Lost spirits, from the dark abyss,
 Cry mournfully "*Beware!*"
 Spirits in glory, and in bliss,
 Sing joyfully "*Prepare!*"

Thus timely warned, and moved with fear
 Of wrath, let us beware;
 For life or death, in this new year,
 For earth and heaven prepare.

Who then of those with us to-day,
 In childhood, youth, or age,
 "To love the Lord our God" can say,
 We all our hearts engage?
 —*Montgomery.*

THE LAST SABBATH IN THE YEAR.

My fleeting years, how fast they fly
 The moments, how they glide away;
 May I for God the hours employ
 Of this most solemn Sabbath-day.

This sacred Sabbath now will end
 Another year of my short time;
 Lord, bid my heart from earth ascend,
 And let these sacred hours be thine.

May I survey with gratitude
 The year that now is past and gone;
 Let not vain thoughts my mind delude,
 But let my heart be thine alone.

Thy sparing mercy doth prolong
 This poor unworthy life of mine
 Help me to raise a grateful song,
 For this preserving care of thine.

But ah! what sad returns I've made;
 Alas! ungrateful I have been;
 And for thy blessings oft received,
 Have only made returns of sin.

Forgive my guilt and folly, Lord,
 Seal to my soul thy pardoning love;
 This day apply thine holy word,
 And my affections raise above.

—*British Workman.*

MILTON'S LAST POEM.

I am old and blind!
 Men point to me as smitten by God's frown—
 Afflicted and des. 'rod of my mind—
 Yet I am not cast down,

I am weak, yet strong—
 I murmur not that I no longer see—
 Poor, old, and helpless, I the more belong,
 Father Supreme! to thee.

Oh, merciful One,
 When men are farthest then thou art most near;
 When friends pass by, my weakness shun,
 Thy chariot I hear.

Thy glorious face
 Is leaning towards me—and its holy light
 Shines in upon my lonely dwelling place,
 And there is no more night.

On my bended knee
 I recognize thy purpose clearly shown—
 My vision thou hast dimmed, that I may see
 Thyself—Thyself alone.

I have nought to fear—
 This darkness is the shadow of thy wing—
 Beneath it I am almost snared—here
 Can come no evil thing.

Oh! I seem to stand
 Trembling, where foot of mortal no'er hath been,
 Wrapped in the radiance of Thy sinless hand,
 Which eye hath never seen.

Visions come and go—
 Shapes of resplendent beauty round me throng,
 From angel lips I seem to hear the flow
 Of soft and holy song.

It is nothing now.
 When Heaven is opening on my sightless eyes—
 When airs from Paradise refresh my brow,
 That earth in darkness lies.

In a purer clime
 My being fills with rapture—waves of thought
 Roll in my spirit—strains sublime
 Break over me unsought.

Give me now my lyre!
 I feel the stirrings of a gift divine;
 Within my bosom glows unearthly fire,
 Lit by no skill of mine.