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# THE GOOD NEWS.

A SEMI-MONTHLY PERIODICAL:

DEVOTED to the RELIGIOUS EDUCATION of the OLD AND YOUNG

PETER FLOGER,

THE TAILOR OF BUINEN.

## CHAPTER I.

FROM WHICH THE READER MAY LEARN THAT  
A GOOD MAN CANNOT DWELL IN SODOM  
WITHOUT VEXING HIS RIGHTEOUS SOUL  
FROM DAY TO DAY.

In one of the most remote provinces of Holland there may be found a small village called Ter Apel, which, a hundred years ago, was a little hamlet, consisting of scarcely twenty houses, and surrounded by numerous farmhouses, at a distance of one or two miles. Had you been travelling then in that quarter of the globe, you would have looked in vain, out of the window of your carriage, to ascertain the exact time on the dial of the church steeple, for there was no church at all, nor was there a schoolhouse, though there were children in abundance. Such of the grown-up people as deemed it worth a walk to hear a sermon, would, weather permitting, spend their Sunday morning in the church of the nearest village, two miles off. It seemed, however, that the good word which they might hear there, no sooner entered one ear than it escaped at the other, for you might regularly find them on the evening of every Sunday in the public-house, whose appearance of prosperity proved its congeniality to the taste of the inhabitants. The Ter Apel people were of opinion that whatever their village might lack, such a building was indispensable, and that it would be cruel to require of old or young

to fetch its privileges from neighbouring places. But whatever those privileges may or may not have been, this much is certain, that no reasonable creature there learnt to worship his Maker, and that no boy was taught to read his Bible. Indeed, a child able to spell might be exhibited at the fair as a wonder of the world. Still there were a few such marvellous children at Ter Apel, as the reader will presently learn.

For at the corner of the main road, and overshadowed by a sturdy oak, was the shop of Van Brenkelen, the grocer, who could by no means agree with the spirit of his fellow-citizens. When Dora, the shoemaker's wife, or Griet, the baker's, stood before his counter, and, holding the articles they had bought in their hands or in their apron, began to chat about the weather and the crops, and finally about their husbands, children, and neighbours, Van Brenkelen would take his pipe, and fill it afresh, and seat himself very comfortably on his wooden stool, for he was assured that now he was to hear the whole chronicle of the village for yesterday and the day before, and that there was no danger that the narrative would be finished sooner than his great meerschaum. He would then be informed that the joiner lived in open war with his partner in life, because she had applied her hand to his eye, to make him see on the dial of the house clock that he had stopped two hours longer at the public-house than he could answer

for; *item*, that the turner's wife had punished her old blind mother-in-law with one day's imprisonment on bread and water, because the poor drudge had upset the coffee-pot; *item*, that both the daughters of the hawkers had gone a dancing with the peasants in the public-house, and to such effect that every pane had jingled in the windows. Mr. Van Brenkelen would hear all this in perfect silence, nor would he ever attempt to edge in a word; for he might as well have tried to put his arm between the spokes of a wheel when the carriage is running at full speed.

But when it happily fell that Dora just stopped to cough, or Griet stooped down to pick up half an ounce of worsted that had dropped in the heat of her gesticulation, then Mr. Van Brenkelen would lose no time, but, laying his pipe aside, start at once at full speed likewise; and, lifting up his voice, he would say—

"Very well, Mrs. Griet; very well, Mrs. Dora; but I must repeat what I have said a thousand times before, this place is the centre of heathendom, and it won't be long till we are like Sodom and Gomorrah. For there is no fear of God before the eyes of this people, and His commandments are counted less than the grass that grows on the street. Old and young, it's all one. We are in the days of Noah. People eat and drink, and gamble, and raffle, and dance, as if life were a horse-fair, and this earth of ours a ball-saloon. Those who have a breath in their nostrils live merrily and jovially, as if there were neither death nor eternity; and those that are dead are shovelled away pell-mell, and folk dance over their graves. I should not wonder if I awoke one morning, and found the whole village swallowed up by an earthquake, for the ground that bears us pants under the weight of this iniquity."

"Just so, just so," the women would answer; "you are quite right, Mr. Van Brenkelen. It's every bit true, and no mistake."

"And"—thus Mr. Van Brenkelen would continue—"would to God there were an ear willing to listen to a good word; but every one is deaf, except when the money rings in the pocket, and the corks fly out of the bottles. And yet, bad as things are, the evil is not too great to be cured by an almighty and merciful God. But no

one wants to be cured, and this is the worst of it. For I think (not to praise myself, for it is through God's grace)—I think that I never was silent about all that, nor was Mr. Welter, who lives opposite, and agrees with me that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; and we at least, through the goodness of God, have children who can read and write, and who don't break other people's windows, nor run through their neighbour's fences. And why cannot your children, and those of your neighbours, be like ours? You say—'We have no school;' but that is a poor back-door; for you know as well as I, that Mr. Welter, who lives opposite to my door, offered, long since, to keep a school for your children which wouldn't cost you a farthing; and I am willing to give my barn for the purpose of a schoolhouse, and large enough it is to contain all the children of the village. But you cannot have forgotten that, when Mr. Welter had announced last spring that he was to open his school on Monday morning, the children kept playing and screaming before his door, and refused to go in. Now I say, Mrs. Griet and Mrs. Dora, you cannot have forgotten that."

Now when Mr. Van Brenkelen addressed the women in that style, they would keep as quiet as if they had tied up their tongues with the worsted they had bought, and they would look down into their aprons, squeezing and ruffling it between their fingers, as if they had found there the cause of all the evil that was going on.

"Don't destroy your apron," Mr. Van Brenkelen would then continue; "for the mischief does not lie in your dress, but in your hearts. God knows that I wish you all good, and have no pleasure in your hurt, nor has He himself, who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth. But you may be sure that, notwithstanding all that, you and your children will be lost for time and eternity, if you don't change your way and turn to God. For to show how exceedingly He hates sin, God has suffered His own beloved Son to be punished in our stead by the public execution of the cross. Now, if we don't turn away from that sin, and take refuge with that merciful Substitute, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? It is bad enough, indeed, that we are sinners and guilty, but still there is a

way open to heaven, if we will only give up sin and listen to God. But you not only *commit* sin, but you *love* it, though knowing that its wages are death and eternal perdition. And this often makes my heart sick, when the present state of our village occurs to my mind. For God is my witness, I am kindly disposed to the people, and if there was only a desire to hear a good word, and to care for better things than money and brandy, I should be ready to open my heart and my house, and everything I have, as surely as my name is John Peter Van Brenkelen."

So Mr. Van Brenkelen used to speak to his customers, and then he would slightly lift his cap from his head to bid them good-bye, after which he often turned to the window to look up to the sky, knowing that the remedy must come from above, for there was none below.

## CHAPTER II.

FROM WHICH THE READER MAY LEARN THAT SODOM LIKEWISE IS VEXED WHEN A RIGHTEOUS MAN LIVES IN IT.

Now the words which good Mr. Van Brenkelen spoke behind his counter, were not buried among the bags of meal and salt. Dora took care that not many minutes passed before all he had said was reported to her husband; and Griet was not slow in giving an account of Mr. Van Brenkelen's "shop sermon," as she called it, to her neighbours next door, and opposite, and round the corner. There would have been no harm, however, in reporting the grocer's sayings, if they had stuck to truth and reported correctly; even the bellman might have performed a service by trumpeting them out at every corner of the street. But the talkative women so rendered Mr. Van Brenkelen's words, and with so many additions and interpolations of their own, that his well-mixed cordial turned into a decoction of gall and wormwood.

One evening the text thus altered, and with its annotations, was brought before the assembly at *The White Horse*. Sitting over their beer and brandy, the members of that company exhausted their wit and eloquence in refuting the assertions of the methodistical grocer. The arguments, however, which were brought forward in favour of the reputation of the community

against Mr. Van Brenkelen's slanderous criticism, consisted chiefly of abuse, and execration, and blows, which were applied to the bar with such power, that the tumblers and glasses returned their responsive vibrations.

"I should like to know," cried, among others, the hawker, while finishing his tumbler and ordering another to stir up the fire of his eloquence, "I should like to know why those hypocrites Van Brenkelen and Welter are better than myself, or anybody else. They may sit down together all the day, reading their Bibles and singing their psalms, but I don't care a fig for that, for it doesn't fill my barrel with sour-crust, nor make my chimney to smoke. Their children may be able to read and to say a hymn, but I don't see that they are a bit better than mine. Last week the grocer's boy, and he is a lad of fifteen, was attacked by the butcher's dog, and trembled and cried, and looked for all as if he was turned inside out, like a stocking. Then my William, who is only thirteen, and can neither read nor write, came up and kicked the beast down. Now I ask, what is the use of all that reading and writing? I never learnt it, and I have got through the world as well as the grocer Van Brenkelen, and the tailor Welter. The one may be able to paint his house every year; I have learnt to live as comfortably as he, and never paint at all. The other may be able to afford a horse and cart to visit his customers on their farms; I visit mine as punctually as he does, and it is on my feet. I don't see what reading and writing, Bible and hymns, have to do with all that. I know perfectly well how much I must charge for three yards of calico, without taking a pencil in one hand and a slate in the other. And I have no need to turn up a Bible to know that I would be a scoundrel if I sold cotton for linen."

"Ay," cried a voice from the audience, "but you sold half linen for entire, to the baker's wife, the other day."

A laugh arose, and several of the company took their glasses from the bar and emptied them with loud applause.

"That's a base lie!" continued the hawker, beckoning with his hand to quiet the noise, "I'm sure the tailor Welter has spread that report, to get the people to buy from himself. I am quite aware of his

and the grocer's designs. They want to be the Great Moguls of this place. The one would like to be the schoolmaster, and the other the minister; and so they would have us all dancing when they fiddle. This is an old plan of theirs, and to carry it out, they stick to each other like two dogs before one cart. When Van Brenkelen folds his hands Welter is ready to pray, and when Welter opens the hymn-book, Van Brenkelen raises the tune. But you never see them here, at the 'White Horse,' to sit down with us cheerily, like honest men. They are made of too fine a clay to lower themselves to our level. I won't go into their doings between themselves when alone. I don't trust those hypocrites; I say I don't trust them a fig."

When the hawker thus addressed his audience, they marvelled at his eloquence, and confirmed his conclusions by their cheers. He did not tell them, however, that Mr. Van Brenkelen had helped him, last week, to pay his taxes, and that Mrs. Welter, from compassion, had hired his wicked daughter Trina, to prevent her running about into mischief with low company. Had he told these particulars, as well as the rest, his hearers might perhaps have lessened their applause. But since nobody knew, the praise was as general as undeserved. So, encouraged by his success, and empowered by the brandy, the eloquent orator continued:—

"Yes, to be sure, such is the case; I say it is just as I have said, and whoever thinks differently is mistaken, and a stupid fellow to boot. It is more than time to throw up that nest of hypocrisy, and to deliver the village from those shop-sermons. We must separate those two inseparable birds, and nothing can be easier."

"Come, not that altogether," cried Dirk the weaver; "they hold together like warp and woof."

"Nonsense," quoth the hawker; "before you can say Jack Robison, I'll have them snipped like a piece of fustian that I run through with the scissors."

"Don't brag," replied the weaver, laughing; "we know that your sayings are like dandelion salad—a hamper in the kitchen, but a mouthful on the table."

"And I wager you as much as you like, that within eight days they'll be like the cat and the mouse," screamed the hawker,

bringing down his fist on the bar, so that the jugs and tumblers rattled.

Nothing more was required to stir the company. The bets were settled, and the hawker only conditioned secrecy. Then returning home, he threw himself on his bed, where he brooded over the best means to carry out his wretched purpose, till sleep shut his eyelids, already heavy with brandy.

#### CHAPTER III.

WHICH SHOWS THAT A BAD SERVANT IN A GOOD FAMILY IS LIKE GRAVEL IN A PLUM-PUDDING.

If the reader has no objection, we shall walk, the next day, to the tidy house of Mr. Welter the tailor. It is not the best season for a visit just now, for Mrs. Welter has appointed this day to pickle her sour-cROUT, so that her parlour resembles a green-grocer's rather than a sitting-room. Still you can observe that this is a house where there is a place for everything, and everything has its place, and that the mistress does not keep her scrubbing-brush in the cupboard.

"Where in the world may that girl be?" said Mrs. Welter to her husband, who, with crossed legs, *a la Turc*, was sitting on his work-table, sewing a coat. "It seems that her father lives on the opposite side of the globe."

"It seems," said the tailor, with a smile, "that her father has to transact important business with her, since he has called for her so urgently."

"At least something of a very intricate nature. Nearly an hour has passed since she hurried off," replied Mrs. Welter, looking up to the cuckoo-clock, which with its glossy brass chains, and smoothly scoured weights, was suspended on the white-washed wall.

"I suppose," quoth the tailor. "that she could not resist the invitation of the fine weather to take a trip to the fields. I told you before that you would have a great deal of trouble with that damsel."

"Well, I knew all about it; and you know that I did not take her for my pleasure. But the poor thing was rambling about like a vagabond, and I'm sure the prison would be her lodging now, had we not taken her in. Who can say whether perhaps it may not please our good Lord

to save a soul from death through our instrumentality?"

"I hope so; but that girl from *Buinen*, I mean Mr. Floger's daughter, pleased me much more."

"Ay, to be sure; that's a child of good parents, and I believe there is something good from the Lord in her. She will get a situation soon enough, for she is a nice, sweet thing; and should she get into a family which knows but little of the way of salvation, the Lord may make her a preacher to the children at least. But our Trina is not likely ever to get a situation unless she is trained by us. It is true, the Jew Solomon offered to hire her, provided she had no objection to sleeping in the garret of the barn, where James, and Jack, and everybody has access. But—"

"Ay, very well," interrupted the tailor, "I won't have you send her away. If you have begun with God, you will accomplish with God. As to me, if you don't dread the trouble, I shall not interfere. The greatest portion of the burden comes upon your shoulders, and it is worth carrying if carried for the Lord."

"There now, that's just like you," replied Mrs. Welter joyfully. "That's exactly spoken from my heart. I just ran over the matter in my mind this morning, when I remembered our meeting of last night, at Mr. Van Brenkelen's. You recollect, we read the 4th chapter of John's Gospel, and Mr. Van Brenkelen's attention was especially directed to these words: *Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well.* It was a nice word which he spoke, indeed. And then I thought, that on the whole, a Christian family was not right in refusing to hire an ignorant and unbelieving servant. Where are the poor, neglected girls to learn to serve God but in a family that fears Him? It is true a great deal of trouble and inconvenience may come out of it for the first time. But if the Lord Jesus had dreaded all that, pray, what would have become of

"Wife!" said the tailor, laying down his scissors, and giving her his hand, "I love thee. Rightly the wise king said, *Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord.* I like smart, clever folks in my business, I'm sure; but if a soul might be saved, I should be

ready to allow a bungler for a month or two, though a couple of yards of the best cloth might be spoiled."

Mrs. Welter was just about to shake hands with her enchanted husband, when Trina entered the parlour, and by her appearance brought down the matrimonial poetry to the prose of the kitchen.

"Where have you been?" asked Mrs. Welter, in a tone that kept the medium between irritation and patience. "You know that I'm sitting in the midst of the cabbage, and can't want you for a moment. How can you be so unkind as to stay away for a whole hour-and-quarter?"

"I wanted to speak to my father," replied the girl doggedly; "but perhaps you call it a sin for a child to speak to its father."

"There now!" cried the tailor, looking at the girl with eyes in which anger and indignation kindled a fire, "is it becoming to give such an answer to your mistress? I say I shall—"

"Hush, my dear," interrupted his wife softly; "do not be angry. I'll settle the matter. You know, Trina, that we always told you to honour and love your father. But for that, I should not have permitted you to go and see him at this unsuitable hour of the day. But the Bible says that there is a season to everything. You should have told your father that I only allowed you half-an-hour, and I'm sure he would—"

"And I am sure," interrupted Mr. Welter, "that she has left her father soon enough, but spent the rest of the time in rambling about."

"Rambling a-b-o-u-t!" replied Trina in a snarling tone. "No, sir, I haven't rambled about; but I was detained by the grocer's girl, who met me on the road, and told me that she was going to *Buinen*, to take her master's blue coat to Mr. Floger the tailor."

"What?" exclaimed Mr. Welter. "You don't mean to say that she was carrying Mr. Van Brenkelen's new blue coat which I made for him last week?"

"Yes, I do say so. She told me that her master was quite discontented with that coat, and had called it a clumsy piece of work."

"How is it possible?" cried the tailor; "why, he himself assured me last night that he never had such a fine coat on his back before. I am sure you are telling a

lie, Trina; but I'll go immediately and examine the matter."

Mr. Welter threw away his needle and thread, and was just about to jump from his table, when his wife placed herself before him, and laying both her hands upon his shoulders, kept him back on his tailor's throne.

"Now I say, Welter," said she with a supplicating voice, "remember that you are a Christian man. You must not go in that spirit. I am sure there is a mistake. I daresay Mr. Van Brenkelen has sent his old blue coat to get it mended by Mr. Floger. You know that good Mr. Floger is in low circumstances, though he is a dear child of God. I am sure Mr. Van Brenkelen has sent him his old coat to give him some work, for they are hard-up, poor people! Keep quiet, my dear. We'll see Mr. Van Brenkelen next Friday at our usual meeting; you may speak to him about it then."

This word of Mrs. Welter had its desired effect. Mr. Welter took up his needle and thread, and muttering a few words which nobody could understand, continued his work.

"Now," said Mrs. Welter, turning to Trina, "go as quickly as you can to Mrs. Van Brenkelen, and present my compliments to her, and ask her to be kind enough to lend her cabbage-plane for one day if she don't want it for herself, which I don't believe, since she has her sourerout in the barrels already. Be kind, I say, Trina, be kind, and ask how Mr. Van Brenkelen and the children are."

Trina obeyed immediately. Now Mrs. Van Brenkelen was a first-rate woman, who, from the first of January to the last of December, kept her house as clean and orderly as a china-press, which is not a trifle in a grocer's house, into which the fat and grease from east and west are dropping all the year round. But she was herself at the spot from morning till evening, and constantly kept a small brush and a napkin in her pocket to wipe away every speck of dust that was visible to her eagle eye. Her servants were fully aware of this fact, and knew very well that none of them could appear in a shoe and a slipper if they desired to keep on good terms with their mistress. Now such a character is usually not the property of soft and weak natures,

and, to tell the truth, Mrs. Van Brenkelen was not very easy to deal with, if once her temper was set on fire. In this respect she much resembled Mr. Welter, who, like her, was not composed of milk and water, as the reader may have observed already.

Now, what with Trina knowing this weak point in Mr. Van Brenkelen's character, and the latter having just rebuked her maid-servant for dropping oil on the white-scoured floor of the parlour, Mrs. Welter's request produced quite a different effect from what the tailor and his wife had expected. For Trina, instead of presenting their kind compliments as she had been ordered, entered the parlour on a sudden, and while Mrs. Van Brenkelen was just engaged in calculating how much pepper and salt she would require to pickle the half cow which was to be preserved for the approaching winter, the servant fell at once like a brick, in the midst of her ciphering, with the information—

"Mrs. Welter wants your cabbage-plane, and has sent me to fetch it."

Perhaps the reader is not altogether unacquainted with the experience of a person disturbed in some rule of proportion, and knows, perhaps, that even a clumsy rough errand like this is not required to make one look up with a frown, as if the November storms were playing over head. Suffice it to say that Mrs. Van Brenkelen was anything but at her ease when Trina so uninvitedly crossed her arithmetical path, and looking up to her with a scowling countenance, she said:

"Eh, indeed? Of course the subjects ought to obey when the queen of the village gives her orders. But it appears to me that if there is such need of a plane, one might buy one for one's-self instead of borrowing from other people."

"That's not my business," replied Trina crossly, "but I think you might be thankful to do a pleasure to a good customer like my master."

"Indeed?" quoth Mrs. Van Brenkelen, taking the desired plane from the shelf, and handing it to the servant. "Indeed; is that your opinion, ma'am? But it appears to me that Mr. Welter may be quite as thankful to have my husband among his customers."

"A fine custom that!" answered the girl, smiling sourly. "Mr. Welter is so

thankful for it, that he fully permits you to send Mr. Van Brenkelen's blue coat to Mr. Floger's. I am sorry your servant has such bad weather for her journey to Buinen."

"Well, I never!" cried the grocer's wife, taking her pocket-handkerchief to wipe her face, that began to perspire from the glow of her indignation. "Who in the world has authorized your master to permit or forbid me to send my husband's clothes wherever I like? If he thinks to be such a king in our village, tell him to sway his sceptre over other people, and to order them to give up their planes at his command."

"There is your plane," answered Trina, throwing the instrument on the table.

"Good-bye, ma'am."

And in a moment the tailor's servant had left the threshold of the grocer's. With a leap or two she was back in her master's parlour.

"Mrs. Van Brenkelen won't give up her plane. She said you might buy one for yourself; that it was more than time to put a stop to all that borrowing and lending; that on that score you might one day soon try to borrow her bonnet from her head. And a great deal more she said which I can't tell, for she was as sour as a crab, and her head was just like a red cabbage boiled with vinegar."

This was too much for the tailor, who dropped his hands on his knees, and gazed in perfect astonishment at the girl, while she was wagging her tongue like a rattle. Mrs. Welter tried in vain to soften him down, and to persuade him that certainly there was again a mistake. But Trina asserted most decidedly that all she had said was pure truth, and that she could not go to her mistress to risk an insult by going to the grocer in person.

"No, no," cried the tailor, "you shall not go. I always told you that the grocer's wife is a whimsical and capricious sort of character. We had better keep aloof from such people, and thank God we may do without them quite as well. I say, Trina, go to the grocer's at once, and ask him to give you that volume of sermons which I lent him the other day. And do take along that pair of pincers that lies in the box, and tell him that I don't want it any longer."

Mrs. Welter burst out into tears, and besought her husband to delay those orders till the next day. But when she saw his eyes, and observed the fire of anger that flashed out of them, she perceived that it was a hopeless case, and seating herself on a chair in the corner of the parlour, she put her apron before her eyes, and began weeping bitterly.

(To be continued.)

### WHOSE GOOD WORKS—OURS OR CHRIST'S?

The day was bright, the footpath tangled and stony, as I wandered by the river-side. An aged beggar crossed my path: I must speak. "My old friend," said I, "do you think you know the way of being saved?"

"Of course I do," said the old man, in a voice which told me he was from Ireland, and in words that soon showed me he was a Romanist.

"How then, my good friend, do you hope to be saved?"

"Why, by living a good life," said he.

"And have you done so?" said I.

He shook his head, but said nothing, save that he had done the best he could.

"But did you never hear of Him who lived a good life for us?" I replied. "You know that His life was a good one, and the Bible says it was lived for us."

"Yes; but mustn't we put some trust in our good works?" asked he.

"Were not Christ's good works far better than ours? and if God will let us take them instead of our own, would it not be much better to trust them?"

"Why, yes, of course; but will He?"

"He will; He will; for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

We shall better understand the nature of that bargain which would give the gain of the whole world for the loss of the soul, if we consider what the soul is in its capacity for happiness; we shall find that it is in an excellency greater than the sun, of an angelical substance, sister to the cherubin, an image of the Divinity, and the great argument of that mercy whereby God did distinguish us from the lower forms of beasts and trees and minerals.—*Jeremy Taylor.*

## RELIGION NOT CHRISTIANITY.

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

*Continued.*

From the wide spread conviction of guilt and in-dwelling sin, and from ignorance of God's revealed plan of saving guilty sinners, men now, and in every age, have gone about to establish their own righteousness. It was in pursuit of this that Cain offered to God the fruit of his labor. It was in pursuit of this, that the heathen, in their bloody rites offered their children in sacrifices to their idols; giving the *fruit of their bodies for the sin of their souls.*—It is in pursuit of this that the Hindoo hopes, by self-imposed tortures, to commend himself to his deities.—'Twas after this that the Jew busied himself in fulfilling all the outward performances of the ceremonial ritual and, forgetful of the spirituality of the law, was scrupulous only as to its letter.—'Tis after this that the Romanist subjects himself to the yoke of legal bondage, to fastings and penances, and mortifications, believing that by these he can merit grace and increase of glory.—'Tis in pursuit of this that the Socinian, who dares to reject the Deity and Atonement of the Saviour preaches a lifeless morality and spreads his pinions in the presumptuous hope of passing, in his own strength, the gulf between earth and heaven.—It is in pursuit of this, that countless multitudes of religious people, Protestants forsooth, *do many things and hear the word gladly* and are very religious, while they mistake the form of godliness for its living power. Alas, it is not only in systems openly opposed to Christianity that this spirit may be traced, it lies at the root of much of the Theology that claims an orthodox descent, and is the very essence of the faith of many a one to whom the name of Protestant is a boast, and by whom the charge of Socinian teaching would be considered a libel. How many thousand sermons are passed off for Evangelical, which might be preached acceptably to professedly Socinian congregations.

What is it but this ignorance of Christ when a sinner is startled by the approach

of death, and is forced seriously to consider his prospects with respect to eternity, that makes him look back upon an honorable course, a good, useful, temperate life, a blameless walk; and seek in a retrospect of the past for comfort, or rather refuge from the accusations of conscience—of again, when the spirit is pleading with the sinner, convincing him of sin, of judgment and of righteousness, what hinders him from at once embracing the Gospel, and sinner as he is, going to Jesus for pardon and justification, saying *Lord remember me—Lord if thou wilt thou canst make me clean.* This is all my Theology.

"Just as I am, and waiting not,  
To cleanse my soul from one foul blot,  
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot  
O Lamb of God, I come."

What but this, that in the retrospect of the past he has nothing in himself on which to lean. In the one case there is a false hope cherished from the fancied supposition of merit professed; in the other, real hope is rejected, from a consciousness that no such merit exists. In both these cases, the same ignorance of the Gospel plan of acceptance with God prevails, and the same spirit operates which influenced the young man in the Gospel, when he came to Christ enquiring, *What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life.* Ignorance of the justifying righteousness of sinners, the *righteousness of God*, in contra-distinction to the righteousness of the law; Christ's righteousness is the righteousness of God for Christ is God, Rom. iii. 20-25. Here we have the mystery of godliness explained. Hooker, with beautiful conciseness, thus expresses this mystery,—“Man sinned: God suffered—God became man's sin; that man might be made the righteousness of God.” Morality is essential to the Christian character, but morality implies Christianity. Christian morality implies a belief in the doctrines of the New Testament, so that the duties of Christianity may be seen to grow out of its doctrines. Christian practice differs as essentially from Pagan practice as do the doctrines of Christianity from Paganism. Almost every Heathen moralist has recommended temperance, and the forgiveness of injuries, but none have ever taught men to be temperate, and to forgive upon Gospel principles.

bles. How could they? They have never taught men to forgive because we have been forgiven—this is peculiar to Christianity—this flows from the doctrine of the Atonement, and can flow from nothing else. Morality of life and outward decorum, the law of public opinion requires from us.—Outward decorum, however, is not the rule whereby we shall be judged at the bar of God, where the amiable Christian and the moral Heathen are accounted alike unrighteous when destitute of Christ's righteousness.

There are many in the religious world eminent for their zeal, and the high tone of morality that pervades their words and actions, yet the fear of God is not before their eyes, the love and knowledge of God, as their covenant and reconciled God in Christ Jesus, is not shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost. We can imagine a faultless moral character, the very twin sister of Solomon's model wife, of whom it is said, *other daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all*—a very paragon of natural perfection, one who had kept all the commandments from her youth up; one whom Jesus could have loved, whose pure mind was never sullied by an unchaste thought, whose eyes are ever closed against vanity, whose holy ears are ever stopped to the siren voice of the world; like the Holy of holies in the Temple, none but the high priest must enter there. Yet such a faultless character, if destitute of the vital actuating principle of the Gospel, the holy Law of God pronounces radically defective, *corrupt, dead in trespasses and sins*.—Alas, how many such perfect characters may find the door shut against them, and miss heaven at last, Luke xiii. 25. How many of noble and royal blood will be glad to take hold of the skirt of Mary Magdalene in that awful day when the *filth* shall be first and the first last, when the *filth* and *offscouring* of the earth shall be heralded among the aristocracy of heaven. But do not suppose me for one moment to imply, that it is not incumbent upon the Christian teacher to enforce the necessity of morality and good works. Nothing is more foolish than the antipathy evinced by some religionists to the preaching of morality, as if it infringed upon the doctrines of grace. Would to God there was

more pure morality preached. If indeed, it be a cold, heartless philosophic virtue detached from the Gospel and independent of its influence, show it the door, let it be excluded from the sanctuary. Such a philosophy of morals presents erroneous views of the condition of man, and the character of God, it appeals not to the revealed will of God as the standard of right and wrong, and enforces the obligations of virtue, rather from the considerations of feeling, honor, interest, public opinion and worldly policy, than from those higher, nobler, purer motives which Jehovah addresses to us in His Word. But if it be a morality founded upon Christian principle, and looking directly to the will of God as its ruler, and the glory of God as its end, it is assuredly a proper subject for the pulpit and suited to the state of man, as a fallen creature. Christians are become so like the heathen in their practice, they need to be reminded frequently, with a *verily, verily*, that the Lord Jesus Christ *gave Himself for us not only that He might redeem us from all iniquity, but also to purify unto Himself a peculiar people zealous of good works*.

It is much to be deplored that our zealous philanthropists and praiseworthy advocates of virtue and temperance, so seldom draw their arguments from the New Testament. The total absence of Gospel principle in the cause of "total abstinence," would make it appear that our popular lecturers deemed Christianity a drag on the chariot wheels of enlightened morality and human progress. Every body knows inebriety is in direct antagonism to the whole letter and tenor of the Scriptures, yet nobody knows who has read the New Testament, that a glass of wine or anything else, is absolutely forbidden. The precepts of the Gospel are general in their application, and not particular. The Gospel enjoins habits of temperance, sobriety in all things, yet there is no special command in regard to dietetics. The Apostle Peter's injunction, *be sober* is general, not particular, moral, not physical. Be not intoxicated with pleasure, business, sensuality, or sin. This mental inebriety is as injurious to the soul's health as physical dissipation to the body, it excludes God from the thoughts and drowns all heavenly aspirations.—"Society, society," said Madame De Staël

"how it renders the mind frivolous, and the heart hard, and makes us live for what people will say of us." The person who indulges freely in the world's sparkling cup of pleasure and fashionable gaiety, is drunk all the year round, ever tipping, never sober night or day; ever intoxicated with the mental alcohol of impure literature, stupefied with the poisonous fumes and enervating effects of vicious company and corrupting amusements, in which many total abstainers indulge, who desecrate the Lord's day in pleasure excursions and other intemperate revellings. The Gospel requires us to *abstain from all appearance of evil*, and tells us that *all things are lawful, but not expedient*. The Gospel requires not only *circumcision of the flesh*, but of the heart. Abstinence from any sensual gratification because such is injurious to physical health, or prejudicial to character and advancement in life, and not because such is forbidden by Christ, is the mere circumcision of the flesh. A Christian influenced by these motives is a nominal, not a real Christian; a letter, not a spirit Christian; for not being influenced by the love of Christ, he is scarcely distinguishable from an abstemious Pagan. How many from overlooking this distinction mistake reformation of character for change of heart! They imagine because they have outwardly renounced intemperance and gross vices, they are inwardly Christ's disciples. Because they have kept out of the hands of the police, they are Christ's freemen, and *renewed in the Spirit of their minds*. The "lock-up" and the "stocks," are far more efficient reformers than the "pledge," yet most unsuccessful preachers of righteousness.

A celebrated temperance lecturer in proving, that the pledge was not enough, candidly, honestly, and above all conventional prejudices, writes thus—"Out of the many thousands of intemperate men who signed the pledge under me very few kept it to the end, unless they became new creatures in Jesus Christ. More recently, those who became drunkards cannot at all be depended upon, unless they also become Christians. Of those who have signed the pledge within a few years, not one has remained firm unless they took Jesus as their Prophet, Priest and King."

One of the most powerful preachers of

any age tried the experiment of moral preaching for twelve years, and afterwards made the following emphatic declaration:—"I could expatiate on the meanness of dishonesty, on the villany of falsehood, on the despicable arts of calumny, on all those deformities of character which awaken indignation against the pests and disturbers of human society. Now, could I, upon the strength of those expostulations, have got the thief to give up his stealing, and the liar his deviations from truth, it never occurred to me that all this might have been done, and yet the soul of every hearer have remained in full alienation from God, as destitute of the essence of religious principle as ever. But the interesting fact is, that during the whole of that period in which I made no attempt against the enmity of the carnal mind to God, I certainly did press the reformatations of honour and truth, and integrity among my people, but I never once heard of any such reformatations being effected; I am not sensible that all the vehemence with which I urged the virtues and proprieties of social life, had the weight of a feather on the moral habits of my parishioners."—Here is an honest confession of a great mind. Yes, it was not till this eminent philosopher, Dr. Chalmers, learned the Gospel from the old women of Kilmory, in the humble cottages of his flock, it was not till some God-instructed Aquila or Priscilla taught this mighty Apollon the way of the Lord more perfectly, that he became impressed with the strictness of God's law and the utter alienation of man's heart; it was not till he urged upon his hearers as lost, guilty, perishing sinners the doctrines of Grace, and told them of the righteousness of God, that he saw any salutary change in their morals.

But, do I disapprove of total abstinence? No, in no wise, I commend the practice, not only from a glass of wine even for the stomach's sake, but from all those horrible decoctions which the Temperance faculty prescribe, which are more demoralizing to the stomach than wine, and not so beneficial for our oft infirmities. I disapprove, however, of enforcing abstinence upon heathen principles.

But to return, how is this righteousness to be had? *It is unto all, and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference*

be they heathen or Christian, bond or free, poor or rich, ignorant or learned, mean or noble, vicious or virtuous, intemperate or temperate. The crowned monarch and the ermined judge must wear it; the poor woman at the washtub, and the captive in the dungeon must wear this royal raiment—all must have it, my fellow-sinners, all who will be saved!!

This is Christianity, this is the truth of the Gospel, and I thank God, that this blessed truth is beautifully and explicitly set forth in the formularies of the Church, of which I am a minister. "We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works and deservings, (11th Article.) This is the Gospel which Christ came down to our world to reveal, the Gospel which the Apostles preached and martyrs sealed with their blood by which saints lived, and upon which they rested their souls for time and eternity. The Gospel, which in the early days of Christianity crumbled heathenism to ruins, and in the sixteenth century restored the religion of the Bible to its primitive purity. Many reject it, and laugh at its simplicity; others despise and mock it as if it would lead to licentiousness. But they, who taught by the Holy Spirit, have felt the plague of the heart's lusts, and understand its soul comforting efficacy, they who know it in the truth and power thereof, know that the belief of this despised doctrine, is the most powerfully constraining motive to good works and holiness of life—the governing principle which causes a man to give himself up, body, soul, and spirit to his God—they know that it is this alone which gives peace, happiness, hope—they know that ~~if~~ this distinguishing truth of Christianity is known and savingly believed—enough; if this unknown—worthless all religion and theology beside.

May God the Spirit teach you all this truth, and give you peace in believing it.—Search the Scriptures, make them your authoritative standard, and learn then from God the nature of true religion. While all Christians acknowledge the authority of the Bible in words, many virtually ignore it. Few teach the whole of the Bible; men from prejudice, party-spirit, expediency, or self-righteousness resort to sup-

pressions, modifications, adulterations, reconciliations, pious frauds, and I know not what of palpable denials and contradictions of God's truth. They call this criticism, which means just this—I don't like what God has said, therefore I will make God speak what I like. Thus people can make any passage of Scripture to mean anything that they desire. Salmasius distinguished for his profound and extensive learning, after a life of laborious criticism has left these remarkable words for our admonition—"Had I one year more to live, all that time would be spent in reading the Psalms of David and Epistles of Paul."

*If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God.* The humble doers of God's will, and the prayerful readers and hearers of His word, generally know all that is essential to salvation; and usually find that the more diligently they practice the precepts of Christianity the better they understand its doctrines. *He that doeth righteousness is righteous. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven.* Coleridge has well said, "Our fellow-creatures can only judge what we are by what we do; but in the eye of our Maker, what we do is of no worth except as it flows from what we are. Unless works are done from Christian motives, and the worker is an accepted believer in Christ, they are not acceptable with God. The right discrimination of religious character is very useful now, when it is the fashion to pay homage to Christianity with a *hail master*, and yet deny it the tribute and the influence which it claims over the heart and affections—when it is fashionable to assume its garb, ape its manners, and mimic its rites and ceremonies, but very unfashionable to practice its duties, participate in its self-denying spirit, and lofty, heaven-aspiring avoidance of every carnal and worldly conformity.

I trust that these remarks may lead you to a serious consideration of this all-important subject; if you, dismissing all prejudice and sectarian bias, and rejecting all human authority, go to the Bible as a sinner and not as a critic, with a single eye to the truth, the Spirit will *guide you into all*

*truth, and give you a right understanding in all things.*

May it be so with us. May we know more and more of the *love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that we may be filled with all the fulness of God.*

#### PLAIN WORDS FROM A PLAIN MAN.

Let me tell you of a faithful rebuke I had from one of the "uneducated" as we call them, though some of these are perhaps better taught of the spirit than we are. The work of grace in them is less surrounded and obscured by worldly wisdom.

The man I allude to, C. S., was very poor, and hopelessly ill. His large family depended on the hard labour of his wife. They had few friends, and were in extreme destitution, amidst which C's faith shone brilliantly. His trust and hope were so encouraging, I delighted in visiting him almost daily. Then came a trying time. The woman's work fell off, my means failed, and it was so distressing to witness suffering, while utterly unable to relieve it, that I desisted from going for more than a week. At last I went. C. greeted me eagerly, inquiring if I had been ill? No. Was I offended with him? No. Then why had I not come? Thus pressed, I told him the simple truth. I had nothing to give him, and could not bear to see his need. He raised himself on his elbow, and, his pale face flushing with emotion, said, "And did you think you were the only servant the Lord had? Did you think He had nothing to give because you hadn't? Now, look there! open that cupboard (he waited till I had done so), many a time you have seen that empty, now there is food in it. A lady heard my wife speak of my long illness, and every day for the last week she has sent me something. Is not that the Lord's doing? It *hurts* me for you to distrust Him." A minute after, came an apology for too "free speaking,"

but most heartily did I assure this dear brother I needed none, and could only thank him for his reproof. After some talk I rose to go. He looked at me hesitatingly a minute, and then said, "I'm thinking if you don't trust God for me, you don't do it for yourself. O, it is such misery not to feel *sure* of Him. I can't help saying, *take care!* You won't take it amiss?"

#### A DISTRICT VISITOR.

"BE SURE YOUR SIN WILL FIND YOU OUT."

Hubert was as yet of tender age, when his worthy father, the huntsman of Farmstein was, in the heart of the forest, shot down by an unknown poacher. His mother brought up her fatherless boy as well as she could, and, at the age of twenty, when he had become a skilful forester, he obtained his father's situation.

It happened that one day, when Hubert was hunting in the forest with many hunters and hunting friends, he was shot at a large stag and missed it. Presently, a voice exclaimed piteously in the copse, "O, heaven, I am shot!" Hubert moved forward, and found an old man, who was uttering loud groans, as he lay covered with blood. The whole company of hunters gathered round the dying man. Hubert, however, knelt down beside him, took him in his arms, and, with loud lamentations, begged his forgiveness, protesting that he had not seen him. The dying man, however, said, "I have nothing to forgive you, for that which hitherto has been concealed from all the world shall now come to light. I am the poacher who shot your father, just here under this old oak. The very ground where we now are was dyed with his blood; and it has evidently been destined that you, the son of the murdered man, should, on this precise spot, without any thought or intention of such a thing, avenge the act on me. God is just!" he exclaimed, and presently expired. A shudder ran through all the bystanders, and one of them exclaimed:—

"Thy righteous judgments, Lord, 'tis vain to cheat.  
Sooner or later they the caitiff meet"

## I CAN'T FEEL.

From early spring down to the autumn of the year, a very sedate and contemplative man had been accustomed to call upon me, in respect to his religious thoughts and anxieties. At first he seemed to have *thoughts* only, but they ripened by degrees into anxieties. He began by asking about theories, or doctrines, apparently without any idea of making an application of the truth to himself. He had points of difficulty which he wished to have explained, and then he found *other* points; and these gradually changed in character from abstract questions to those of the application of the truth. From the first I tried to lead him on to the personal application; but months passed away before he appeared to have much sense of his sin, or much anxiety about himself.

But he came to this, and after quite a struggle of mind, as it appeared to me, to lead himself to believe in salvation by personal merit, he gave that up. He said to me, "I have become convinced that sinners are saved, not by their own goodness, but because they are pardoned on account of Jesus Christ. Faith in him is the only way for them."

After this I conversed with him several times, when he appeared to me to be not far from the kingdom of God; but I was as often disappointed, for he would come back to me again in as much trouble and unbelief as before. Again and again I had answered all his inquiries, teaching him out of the Scriptures; had brought up to his mind all the doctrines of truth, the divine promises and directions, sin and salvation; but all in vain. He had become very solemn, and seemed to be entirely candid and really in earnest. His Bible had become his constant study; he was a man of prayer; he attended upon all our religious services with manifest interest; he appeared to have a deep sense of his sin and danger; but he had no hope in Christ.

I finally said to him one evening—

"I do not know, my dear sir, what more can be said to you. I have told you all that I know. Your state as a sinner lost, exposed to the righteous penalty of God's law, and having a heart alienated from God; and the free offer of redemption by Christ; and your instant duty to repent of

sin, and give up the world, and give God your heart; and the source of your help, through the power of the Holy Spirit assured to you, if you will 'receive' Christ;—all these things have become as familiar to you as household words. What more can I say? I know not what more there is to be said. I cannot read your heart. God can, and you can by his aid. Some things you have said almost made me think you a Christian, and others again have destroyed that hope. I now put it to your own heart—if you are not a Christian, what hinders you?"

He thought a moment; said he—

"I can't feel!"

"Why didn't you tell me this before?"

"I never thought of it before sir."

"How do you *know* this hinders you?"

"I can think of nothing else. But I am sure I shall never be converted to God, if I have no more feeling than I have now.—But *that* is my own fault. I know you cannot help me."

"No, sir, I cannot; nor can you help yourself. Your heart will not feel at your bidding."

"What then *can* I do?" said he, with much anxiety.

"Come to Christ *now*. Trust him.—Give up your darling world. 'Repent, so iniquity shall not be your ruin.'"

He seemed perplexed, annoyed, vexed; and with an accent of impatience, such as I had never witnessed in him before, he replied,—

"That is impossible. I want the feeling to bring me to that, and I can't feel!"

"Hear me, sir," said I; "and heed what I say. I have several points.—

"1. The Bible never tells you that you must feel, but that you must repent and believe.

"2. Your complaint that you 'can't feel' is just an excuse by which your wicked heart would justify you for not coming to Christ now.

"3. This complaint that you 'can't feel' is the complaint of a self-righteous spirit."

"How is it?" said he.

"Because you look to the desired feeling to commend you to God, or to make you fit to come, or to enable you to come."

"Yes to enable me," said he.

"Well, that is self-righteousness, in the shape of self-justification for not coming;

or in the shape of self-reliance if you attempt to come. That is all *Legalism*, and not the acceptance of a gracious Christianity. You cannot be saved by the law.

"4. Your complaint is the language of the most profound ignorance. To feel would do you good. Devils feel—lost spirits feel.

"5. Your complaint that you 'can't feel' tends to lead you to a false religion—a religion of mere self-righteous feeling. Religion is duty."

"But, sir," said he. "there is feeling in religion."

"But, sir," said I, "there is duty in religion; and which shall come first? You ought to feel; you ought to love God, and grieve that you are such a senseless sinner."

"I know I am a sinner, but I can't feel any confidence to turn to God, to draw me to him,"

"You are like the prodigal in the fifteenth of Luke, when he thought of saying to his father, 'Make me as one of the hired servants.' Poor fool! Say that to his father! Why, the very idea is a libel on his father's heart. But he didn't think so. Poor fool! he knew no better. And you are a greater fool than he. He went home. And where he met his father he found his heart. He could 'feel' when he found his father's arms around him, and felt the strong beatings of his father's heart. Do as he did. Go home, and you will feel, if you never felt before. You will starve where you are; your 'husks' will not save you."

As I was uttering this he hung his head, cast his eyes upon the floor, and stood like a statue of stone. I let him think. There he stood for some minutes: then turning suddenly to me, reaching to me his hand. he said,—

"I am very much obliged to you. Good night."

I let him go.

About a month afterwards I met him riding alone in his wagon, and he insisted upon me taking a seat with him, for he had "something to say" to me, and he would "drive wherever I wanted to go." I was no sooner seated in the wagon than he said to me,—

"The human heart is the greatest mystery in the world—inexplicable, contradictory to itself; it is abused. The sinner says, as I said to you that last night, 'I can't

feel,' as an excuse for holding on to the world. I found as soon as I was willing to 'go home,' as you called it, the road was plain enough."

"Were you hindered long with that want of feeling?"

"No; I never thought of it till that night. It came upon me like a flash; and then, just as I was thinking it was a good reason in my favour, you dashed it all into shivers."

"And can you 'feel' now?"

"Oh yes I have no trouble about that. I find if a poor creature will turn to God, in the name of Jesus, he will learn to feel as he never felt before."

Sinners not willing to give up the world, and wanting an excuse for their irreligion, exclaim, "I can't feel."—*Spencer*.

### COME TO JESUS, FOR HE IS A LOVING SAVIOUR.

There could be no stronger proof of this than his coming from heaven to suffer and to die. His own words were, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Why did he leave a holy heaven for a sinful world; the songs of angels for the temptations of devils; a throne of glory for a cross of agony? It was love, only love. Love, not to friends, but to foes. "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." He showed his tender love in a thousand ways when on earth, going about doing good, healing all manner of sickness, never turning from the poor and the sad, always the "Friend of sinners." How he wept over Jerusalem, as he thought of her sins and approaching sufferings. When in the agonies of death, how kindly he spoke to the penitent thief at his side; and how earnestly he prayed for his mocking murderers: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." He might easily have called forth an army of angels to deliver him; but if he had not died, we could not have been saved: and therefore, because he loved us, he drank the bitter cup to its very dregs. Now that he has risen again, his love to sinners is as great as ever. Love prompts him to intercede for us, to pity us, to send his Spirit to help us; to wait to be gracious, and save us. He loves you; he died for you; he looks down

with pity on *you*; he calls *you* to come to him. His love has spared you till now, though you have rejected him. His love bears with your sins, and again at this moment entreats you to accept a pardon purchased by his blood. If some friend had spent his fortune to deliver you from prison, or risked his life to save yours, could you treat him with neglect? But Jesus has done far more. He died to redeem you from eternal woe, and make you happy for ever in heaven. He comes to you, and showing the marks of his wounds, he says, "See how I loved thee, sinner. I love thee still. Come unto me, that I may save thee from sin and from hell." O reject not so gracious a Saviour. Trample not under foot such wonderful love. You will never meet with such another Friend. Trust him. Love him. You will always find him full of pity and tenderness. He will comfort, guide, protect, and save you amid all the dangers and sorrows of life, deliver you from the sting of death, and then make you happy for ever in heaven. O come to this loving Saviour.

See Luke xix. 41-44; xxiii. 33-43; John x. 1-30; xv. 12-15; Rom. v. 6-8; Eph. iii. 17-19.

### THE SAINT'S PEDIGREE.

Christ is to us,

- Our Lord, 1 Cor. I. 2.
- Our Friend, Cant. V. 16.
- Our Flesh and Blood, Heb. II. 14.
- Our Brother, Heb. II. 17.
- Our Father, Isa. LXIII. 16.
- Our Husband, Rom. VII. 4.

We are to Christ,

- His Servants, Rom. VI. 22.
- His Friends, John XV. 14.
- His Kinsmen, Mark III. 21.
- His Brethren, John VII. 3.
- His Sons, Gal III. 26.
- His Spouse, Sister, Love, Dove, &c. Cant. VI. 9.

We are both

- One Vine, John XV. 1.
- One Seed, Gal. III. 16.
- One Temple, Eph. II. 15.
- One Body, rom. XII. 5.
- One Spirit, 1 Cor. VI. 17.
- One Christ, 1 Cor. XII. 12.

Isaac Ambrose, 1669.

### THE BLESSED HOPE.

"That blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."—TITUS*i.* 13.

What a bright Bow for a storm-wreathed sky! Hope is a joyous emotion! Poetry sings of it; Music warbles its lofty aspirations; but alas! how often does it weave fantastic visions—give birth to shadowy dreams, which appear, and then vanish! "In the morning" the flowers of life are growing up; "In the evening" a mysterious blight comes—they lie withered garlands at our feet! The longing aspirations of a whole lifetime seem realized; one wave of calamity overtakes us, and washes all away!

But, there is *one* "Blessed Hope" beyond the possibility of blight or decay—"The hope of the glory of God," the hope "which maketh not ashamed"—"the hope of the glory of God," the hope "which maketh not ashamed"—"the glorious appearing of the Great God our Saviour!"

If we long on earth for the return of an absent friend or brother, separated from us for a season, by intervening oceans or continents; if we count the weeks or months till we can welcome him back again to the parental home, how should the Christian long for the return of the "*Brother of brothers*," the Friend of friends? "*I will come again*," is his own gracious promise, "to receive you unto myself!"

O happy day! when he shall be glorified in His saints?—when his people will suffer no more, and sin no more. No more couches of sickness, or aching heads—or fevered brows; no more opened graves, or bitter tears;—and better than all, no more guilty estrangements and traitor unholy hearts! It will be the bridal day of the soul. The body slumbering in the dust will be reunited a glorified body to the redeemed spirit. The grave shall be forever spoiled—death swallowed up in eternal victory. "So shall we *ever* be with the Lord!"

Reader, dost thou "love His appearing?" Art thou in the eager expectant attitude of those who are "*looking for, and hastening unto the coming of the day of God*?" "Yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come!" If thou art a child of the covenant, having conscientious filial nearness to the Throne of *grace*, thou needest not dread the Throne of *glory*! True, He is the "great God," but He is "*our Saviour*." It is a "Kinsman Redeemer" who is ordained "to judge the world in righteousness." Yes! turn thine eye oftentimes towards this bright Bow spanning a glorious future—for remember, it is "to them who look for Him," that He shall "appear the second time without sin unto salvation!"

# THE GOOD NEWS.

October 15th, 1861.

## THE TWO COMPETITORS.

Proverbs ix. Chapter.

There are two competitors for the soul of man referred to in this chapter. The one is Christ, the other is Sin. The former presents himself under the figure of a Queen magnificent and munificent, called WISDOM. The latter is represented under the form of a foolish woman, clamorous, simple, and knowing nothing, the very personification of FOLLY.

Wisdom begins her address to the simple soul, by pointing him to the magnificent mansion which she has prepared. Generous and noble, she found not a building capacious enough to entertain the multitude of guests she felt disposed to invite, so she built a palace on purpose, and in order that she might render it beautiful and strong, she provided for it seven polished and ornamental pillars that were fixed on a solid foundation that standeth sure. This house is the Church of the living God, the Church invisible, the Church in heaven and on earth, the Church that has "a great multitude which no man can number, from all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues." The Church so firmly supported by the pillars of God's power and promise that all the united efforts of the emissaries of hell will not be able to prevail against it.

Having pointed attention to her noble mansion, she next points to the banquet which she has prepared. She tells of the beasts of every degree of rarity and delicacy already in her kitchen. She tells of the wines that maketh glad the heart of man, as mingled in her cellars. She tells that her table is already spread for the beginning of the glorious feast. And she hopes that by appeals so forcible, so appli-

cable, and so urgent, she may woo lovers to herself. This is the great gospel feast prepared for sinful man. Christ has offered up himself a sacrifice for us. His flesh is meat indeed. His blood is drink indeed. And the Lord's table spread on earth is but a visible representation of that table that is furnished in the house of many mansions, where all are invited to sit down and drink of the pleasures that are at God's right hand.

Having prepared her feast of fat things, the Queen dispenses with the attendance of her maidens, and sends them forth to the lanes and the hedges to invite guests to her table, and not content with their united efforts, she addresses her own urgent personal appeals, she goes to the most conspicuous places and urges those who are simple to turn in to her, to come and eat of her bread and drink of the wine that she had mingled. These maidens represent the Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers whom the Lord has sent to tell perishing sinners everywhere, the glorious and glad-tidings that the Gospel feast is prepared, that yet there is room, and by force of persuasion and entreaty, to compel them to come in; and wisdom crying upon the highest places of the city reminds us of the Lord himself, leaving his Father's mansions in glory, and from love to men, not only preparing the feast, but in the synagogues, at the corner of the streets and at the temple itself, standing and crying, "if any man thirst let him come unto me and drink."

The universal offer FREE and FULL, without money and without price. The easy and necessary condition, forsake the foolish, and the glorious result, the gift of life, life eternal, makes wisdom a competitor that ought to secure the favor of every one who has ears to hear.

Folly as a clamorous woman simple and ignorant, sitteth at the door of her house, and cries to strangers, and those that are

going on their way, to turn in unto her.—She addresses the simple soul, and for the lack of substantial gifts to offer, she substitutes clamorous and persevering entreaty. She is just as anxious to ensnare into the broad paths of destruction as Wisdom is to deliver from the destroyer, and with a shameless front she visits the highest places of the city, and she wears the garb of fashion. She assumes the air of patronage, she presents the most seductive allurements, and in reply to all objections she pleads that "stolen waters is sweet and bread eaten in secret is pleasant." But those who are seduced by her wiles, know not that the flowery path that leads to her house is the way to destruction, and its guests are in the depths of hell. This foolish woman is an emblem of sin. It promises much, but it performs nothing. It seems to dwell in a bower of roses, but is actually in a thicket of thorns, and when any one allured by its deceitful appearance, departs to the right or the left, he finds that though stolen waters be for a moment sweet in the mouth, they become bitter in the belly. Though bread eaten in secret is pleasant, it leads to consequences that are inexpressibly painful. Reader, the Wisdom of God, and the deceiver of mankind, stand before you.—The one woos your heart for life, the other for death. They are both intensely anxious to succeed. Which of them arrests your ear or allures your heart? Whose *guest* art thou? If thou payest heed to folly, hear once more the Saviour crying in your ears, "How long, ye simple one will ye love simplicity? The voice of mercy warns thee against estranging thyself from God. Time is short. Flee without delay to the house of Wisdom, and eat and drink of the rich provision she has provided.

#### Remarkable Conversion through a Dream.

Although the Lord has appointed the public preaching of the word to be the principal means of converting sinners, yet he also employs many other agencies for

this purpose. It is in great mercy that he does so. A person may be so situated as to be out of the reach of the public ministration of the word—he may be in a locality in which the gospel is not publicly preached—he may be far at sea, on board of a vessel in which there may be no chaplain—he may be stretched on a bed of sickness; and to say that converting grace never does, or cannot visit a precious soul in any such circumstances would be to limit the power of Omnipotence, and to make an assertion, alike unsupported by Scripture, and by Christian experience. Among the innumerable instrumentalities which the Lord is pleased to make use of for the everlasting good of his people, it cannot be denied that even dreams occupy a place.—Many persons whose walk and conversation has unmistakeably proved the reality of their conversion, have declared that a dream or vision has been the means, by the Divine blessing, of bringing them to a saving knowledge of the truth. The following instance of a conversion having been effected by this means came recently under our notice.

Charles T. had completed a literary course at a University with the view of obtaining license as a preacher of the everlasting gospel. Like too many young men who aspire to this sacred office, his views and motives were entirely worldly. His disposition was amiable. His moral conduct was fair, in many respects exemplary, but yet he was a stranger to Christ. He neglected the means of grace. The Bible was never opened by him and he had long discontinued prayer. Yet all his ways were right in his own eyes—he boasted that he was no hypocrite, and that he was beloved by his associates. His companions, perhaps unconscious of the evil they were doing administered food to his vanity, by telling him that he was good-hearted, generous, &c. At last came the time when he was to be undeceived with regard to his

proper character. A friend of his who had been remarkably wild and dissolute, was laid on his death-bed. Charles knew that his friend was far from being prepared to die—strange to say, although he had scarcely ever manifested any concern regarding the condition of his own soul before God, he now became most deeply interested in the spiritual welfare of his dying friend. He could not endure the thought that he, whom he had so dearly loved, should perish for ever. Charles read to him from the word of God, prayed for him, and brought a minister of the Gospel to visit him. The effect of these efforts on behalf of the dying sinner was uncertain. Before death he professed repentance. But such repentances must necessarily be unsatisfactory. Often persons—who while they think themselves dying, express the deepest sorrow for their sins, and seem to relish the things of Christ, which before they despised—no sooner get better than they forget all their resolutions of amendment, and return with unabated, aye with increased appetite to their former sins. But whatever may have been the effect of the means which Charles used for the conversion of his friend—these means were blessed to himself. When praying in secret for his dying acquaintance, he experienced great pleasure in the exercise, a pleasure which he had never felt before. That he, a poor weak creature of the dust, should be permitted to hold communion with the Almighty Governor of the universe, with the King of kings, and Lord of lords, he felt to be an unspeakable honour and privilege. He therefore resolved to continue the delightful practice of prayer ever afterwards. He also betook himself to the diligent use of the other means of grace. Although he had, until this period of his life, been living “without God in the world,” yet singularly enough Charles had always entertained the idea that he was a Christian. This is by no means an uncom-

mon delusion with people of the same character as the subject of this narrative. From the natural amiability of their position, not to mention the flattery of seeming friends—without any ground for such assurance in the word of God—they come to the conclusion that they are Christians. Their error is also partly owing to the vague and indiscriminate manner in which the term Christian is applied.

As he continued to use the means of grace, the question occurred to him, “What if I am not a Christian?” And the more he examined himself by the word of God the more doubtful did he become. Never had he appeared to himself so sinful as he did now. Instead of becoming, as he had hoped, better and fairer in his own eyes by diligent perseverance in prayer, and the other means of salvation, he seemed to himself to be more unbelieving, more vain, more averse to the things of God than he had ever been before. We say that he thus seemed worse to himself, for in reality he was not so. The Lord was graciously revealing to him, by his spirit, the wickedness of his heart, which had been secret to him before. A person may inhabit a dark filthy apartment, and so long as it remains dark not be aware of its filthiness; but open the shutters and admit the sun-light, and what seemed fair before is foul and hideous now.

Charles used formerly to believe that so long as he did not transgress any of the commandments in word or deed, he did not commit sin. But now, he for the first time realized the solemn truth that, a man is not judged of God by his external conduct, but by the motives from which that conduct proceeds. When he considered that God takes cognizance of all the thoughts, and all the motives of the heart, he began to feel himself exceedingly sinful. All his conduct, even those actions which he had been heretofore in the habit of regarding as righteous, and meritorious, he

now saw to be sinful. He saw that his performances which had seemed to man to be charitable and kind, were not so in reality, they had been done not from the love of God but from no higher motives than mere natural affection, or from seeking the praise of man instead of seeking the approbation of God. These considerations greatly alarmed him. He considered himself the chief of sinners. He felt himself sinking down into a pit of sin; out of which he could see no way of escape.

In this state of mind, one night when asleep in bed, Charles had the following remarkable dream. He thought that he stood before God and his holy angels to be tried—before the great white throne. He saw nothing, but thought that he was asked by God the motives of all his actions, and that he could only attribute them to some evil principle, such as pride, unbelief, desire of human approbation, &c. He was then asked what these evil things meant—A pure and holy God could know them but as the physician may know the disease of his patient, speculatively not experimentally; and in like manner the holy angels knew them not. ‘Oh, dreadful,’ thought he! ‘I stand at a tribunal where my very language is not understood! Is there no man that could stand in my place and answer for me?’ He seemed mentally to look to the right hand and to the left. But there was none to help him. All mankind were in the same condemnation as himself, for he remembered that all his fellow-men were but too well acquainted with the evil motives which had influenced him in his actions. “And is there none,” thought he, “to help me, must I be forever shut out from the benign presence of that God whom I have lately sought?” I am now ruined and undone forever!” Whilst these thoughts were passing through his mind, he seemed to tremble violently from head to foot, so that his very knees smote together.

Suddenly there seemed breathed into his very inmost soul the words—*Jesus Christ*. Jesus Christ, the sinless—bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh; very God, and very man, could stand in his place and answer for him. A burden seemed to roll off him, and he awoke. “And this,” thought he, ‘is Jesus Christ, thousands of times have I heard his sweet name, but never knew my need of him till now; and how perfectly he suits that need. The following queries were then suggested to his mind and their answers. ‘What would Jesus have me to do?’ ‘Believe on Him.’ ‘How must I manifest my faith or belief?’ ‘By keeping his commandments.’ ‘What are his commandments?’ ‘They are all briefly comprised in the short sentence, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself.” ‘And this,’ thought he, ‘I am hence-forward determined to do, the grace of the Lord helping me.’

Thus was this young man brought to a saving acquaintance with Jesus. He manifested the reality of the change by a walk and conversation becoming the gospel. Mourning the sinfulness of his own heart, he rejoiced when he considered that finished righteousness of a crucified and risen Saviour imputed to him, and received by faith.—The grand object of his future life seemed to be, to honour that gracious Saviour, by observing his ordinances, and by walking in the way of his commandments. Surely the Lord is ‘fearful in praises doing wonders.’—Ec. xv. 11.—“In a dream in a vision of the night when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed, then he openeth the ears of men, and seal-eth their instruction.”—Job. xxxiii. 16. 17.

✠ Welcome the cross of Christ and bear it triumphantly; but see it be indeed Christ's cross, not thy own.—*Wilcox*.

## Sabbath School Lessons.

October 26th, 1861.

REBEKAH. GEN. XXIV.

I. *Abraham's commission to his servant concerning the marriage of his son.*

1st. "The Lord had blessed Abraham in all things," ver. 1; had blessed him not only with length of days—"Abraham was old and well stricken in age"—and with spiritual blessings, but had also bestowed upon him great prosperity in his temporal affairs. The Lord had caused all things to work together for the good of his servant. 2nd. Abraham called his eldest servant, to whom he had committed the charge of all his property, and made him promise, upon oath, that he would not take a wife for Isaac from among the Canaanites, in whose country Abraham then dwelt. He further bound the servant by oath to take a wife for Isaac from Abraham's own country and kindred, ver. 2, 3, 4. This solemn covenant the servant entered into, with the proviso, that, after having done his utmost, should the woman refuse to follow him, he would be clear of his oath. Marriage is a most important matter, and should never be entered into without due and serious consideration. Connections of this kind, prudently and prayerfully formed, are fraught with many blessings; but when, on the contrary, they are rashly and unwisely made, are often accompanied by innumerable evils. From Isaac was to spring the promised seed; Abraham was therefore most careful in seeking for him a suitable wife. Believers should not be "unequally yoked with unbelievers," 2 Cor. vi. 14. 3rd. Abraham determined that Isaac himself should not go among his kindred; no, not even to seek a wife. He solemnly enjoined his servant not to permit Isaac to go thither. This injunction he gives, ver. 6; and so anxious was he about this matter, that he repeated it, v. 8. Those who, by grace, have escaped the corruption which is in this world through lust, will be cautious not to go into the way of temptation themselves, or to suffer those whom they love to do so. We see from this that Abraham took the utmost heed to keep his beloved son out of the influence of wicked or irreligious company. Rather than that Isaac should run the risk to be incurred by communion with godless associates, Abraham would have him not marry at all. "If the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath: only bring not my son hither again," v. 8. Observe, that from the circumstances here recorded, we learn that there is nothing inconsistent with our duty to God, in taking and administering oaths on particular occasions, though the habit

of appealing to God in every trivial concern is a heinous sin, and open breach of the commandment, Ex. xx. 7.

### II. *The expedition.*

1st. The servant took ten camels of the camels of his master, and departed. The camel is a most wonderful and useful animal. He is large, powerful, patient, and laborious. In the desert, where there is no water to be procured except at the oases, he can go for about four days without water, from the fact that his paunch is provided with a cellular membrane, which possesses the property of secreting sufficient water to support him during that time. Though an animal of large size, very little food suffices for its nourishment. It is fed only once in twenty-four hours, when marching, with a pound of dat's, beans, or barley, and by means of its long, flexible neck, and sharp teeth, snaps at the thistles and thorny plants which it meets with on its way. It is covered with short, thick wool, which protects it from the burning sun by day, and from the cold by night. Of the Arabian camels there are two distinct species; those of stronger frame but slower pace carry burdens from 500 to 600 lbs., and travel little more than twenty-four miles per day; and those of lighter form, trained to the saddle, with single riders, travel at the rate of 200 miles in 24 hours. The eye of the camel is keen, and its sense of smell is extraordinarily acute. It smells the water a-far, and is then, after long endurance of thirst, apt to break through every restraint. Without the camel, immense portions of the earth's surface would never have been traversed. It has, therefore, been aptly styled "the ship of the desert." What a proof of the infinite wisdom of God in having so adapted the animal to the wants of the inhabitants of those regions in which it is found!

2nd. "For all the goods of his master were in his hand," ver. 10. That he was a God-fearing, prudent, and in every respect most trustworthy servant, we cannot doubt, and Abraham therefore committed to him the charge of all his property. He was probably that Eliezer of Damascus mentioned Gen. xv. 2. Some understand by all the goods of his master being in his hand, that he took with him an inventory of Abraham's effects.

### III. *The scene at the well.*

He went to Mesopotamia unto the city of Nabor. Having arrived here doubtless after a journey of many days, he caused his camels to kneel down by a well of water. It was evening, the time that women went out to draw water. When there, this pious servant prayed to the Lord to prosper him in his mission, and desired a sign by which he should be directed in his choice: "Let it come to pass that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher I pray thee, that I may drink; and

we shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac." This was tantamount to asking for a kind, hospitable, and industrious wife for his master—a most appropriate prayer in the circumstances, and he was doubtless influenced by the Holy Spirit in asking a sign. We should be very careful, however, not to limit the Lord in such a manner, lest the result should rather weaken than strengthen our faith. There are some things to be observed about this prayer. 1st. It was specific. This man had a particular object in addressing God. Some men will spend half an hour in giving utterance to a long list of cold, formal, and disjointed petitions, and if they were afterwards asked what they had been praying for, they would be quite at a loss for an answer. Were they to confess the truth, their answer would be that they had prayed for nothing. Alas for our prayerless prayers! 2nd. In this prayer the man recognized the omniscience of God. Assured that the Lord searcheth the heart and trieth the reins, he spoke in his heart, ver. 45. Not that he merely wished the things which he is here said to have prayed for; but he expressed his wish in language inwardly, though not audibly. 3rd. The Lord's answer to this prayer. How promptly did he fulfil the desires of his servant. Before he had done speaking, Rebekah came out, &c. So is it still. Though it may not be at the time or in the way that we expect, we may be sure that the prayer of faith is no surer breathed than it is answered by the Lord; Isaiah lxx. 24. Observe, too, from the fulfilment of this prayer, that the providence of God overrules every event, the least as well as the greatest. It extended to the prayer of the servant as well as to its realization. In some occurrences the Divine interposition is so conspicuous, that we cannot help seeing it. Such manifestations of the hand of God, we designate special providences. In reality, however, there is no such thing as a special providence. The fall of a sparrow as well as the fall of a kingdom, takes place only in conformity with the Divine plans of government; Mat. x. 29. 4th. The servant's thanksgiving. As soon as he discovered that the Lord had granted his petition, he returns his heartfelt thanks, ver. 27. It is remarkable how, at every success, this godly man rendered thanks unto God. In his conduct, we witness an exemplification of the injunction of the Apostle, Phil. iv. 6.

#### IV. The favourable reception of the servant by Abraham's relatives.

He presented Rebekah with a golden earring and bracelets, in order further to ingratiate himself with her, and as a proof of the riches and liberality of his master. Rebekah had a brother whose name was Laban, who when he

saw the golden ornaments, and heard from his sister all that the man had said, came to the servant, and cordially invited him to partake of their hospitality, ver. 22-31. That the sight of the jewels had no small effect in influencing Laban to show kindness, we may conclude from what we are subsequently told of his character.

#### V. The successful termination of his mission.

The servant frankly discloses his errand to the friends of Rebekah. He relates to them the circumstances which had taken place at the well, and requests from them as frank a response: "And now, if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me: and if not, tell me; that I may turn to the right hand or to the left, ver. 49. Laban and Bethuel both express their conviction that the thing is of the Lord, and that they cannot, therefore, refuse their consent to Abraham's proposal. Doubtless they would have also been highly gratified to bestow Rebekah upon one so eligible in every respect for a husband as Isaac. He was wealthy, amiable, and, highest recommendation of all, had God for his friend. The mother and brother of Rebekah wished that she should remain with them for a few days, at least ten; but the servant was impatient to return to his master, ver. 55, 56. Like a faithful servant, he wished not to be unnecessarily absent from his business. Rebekah, on being consulted, consents to go with the man, without delay. They therefore give her their blessing, and she departs. They meet with Isaac in the field, whither he had gone to meditate at eventide. His meditations were doubtless mingled with prayer. We should often seek solitude for meditation and prayer, and thus we shall never be less alone than when alone. At all times, and in all places, can the believer enjoy delightful communion with the gracious and ever-blessed Trinity. Probably Isaac had gone forth alone to pray that his father's messenger should meet with success. He lifts up his eyes and his prayer is answered; "Behold the camels are coming," ver. 63. As soon as Rebekah had ascertained that it was Isaac who came to meet them, she dismounted from her camel and veiled herself, by which acts she gave proof of her modesty and subjection to her intended husband. "And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death." What a loving, affectionate son Isaac had been! Though three years had elapsed since the death of Sarah, he still mourned her loss; but the blank in his affections was filled up by his young, beautiful, and amiable bride. Ministers of the gospel, who are sent by God to woo precious souls to Christ, may be said to be

represented in this narrative by Abraham's servant. Would that they were all as faithful, as zealous, as active, and as prudent, in the fulfilment of their high and sacred commission as he! And would to God that sinners would as cordially and readily embrace Christ's gracious offer of union, as Rebecca did that of Isaac.

Lessons—1st. Believers should not form matrimonial alliances with unbelievers.—2 Cor. vi. 14.

2nd. We should supplicate Divine assistance and guidance in every lawful undertaking.—Phil. iv. 6.

3rd. Our prayers should be specific; that is, we should have a particular errand when we go to God—Ephes. iii. 14.

4th. The Lord hears and answers the prayers of his people.—Is. lxx. 24; Jn. xvi. 24.

5th. We should not only pray for blessings, but we should return thanks, at all times, for mercies received.—Col. iv. 2.

November 2nd, 1861.

#### THE POOL OF BETHESDA.—JOHN v. 1-16.

I. There was a feast at Jerusalem, and thither Jesus went. There is every reason to believe, that this feast was that of the Passover, the second which had occurred since the commencement of the ministration of our Lord. At such a season the concourse of all classes of people at Jerusalem would be great. Jesus therefore resorted thither, taking advantage of so favorable an opportunity for the promulgation of his glorious Gospel, Prov. i. 20-21. Being made under the law he was also strict in his observance of all the Mosaic institutions.

II. "*Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep-market, a pool,*" &c. The word market is not in the original; it is supplied in our English version to complete the sense. Observe that it is printed in Italics, according to the invariable practice of the translators, whenever they were obliged by the genius of our language thus to supply a word. Some prefer the word "gate" to market as the sheep-gate is frequently mentioned in Nehemiah while there is no sheep-market mentioned in Scripture or by any Jewish writer. It is immaterial, however, whether we supply gate or market, as the gate to which the sheep were brought would have also been the place at which they were bought and sold—the market. The pool by the sheep-market possessed at certain seasons extraordinary healing properties. The Lord in his goodness has been pleased to provide us with many springs, the use of whose waters has a curative effect on a variety of diseases. The healing efficacy,

however, of the waters of Bethesda was not owing to natural causes, but was imparted to them by supernatural influence. The Evangelist states distinctly, not as the general popular opinion of the Jews at the period, but as a fact, which he himself knew and believed, that "an angel went down at a certain season into the pool and troubled the water," v. 4. The pool was called Bethesda, which word signifies "*House of mercy.*" It had five porches for the shelter of the poor patients who came thither to be healed. Thus the humanity of man had co-operated with the mercy of God. Whoever first, after the troubling of the water by the angel, stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had. At such seasons the waters of the pool had virtue to heal every kind of physical ailments. What a lively emblem was this pool of Jesus, that fountain open to the house of David for sin and for uncleanness! Whosoever washes in this great Fountain shall be healed of all his spiritual diseases, 1 John i. 7. He shall be healed of the guilt and be entirely delivered both from the dominion, and the pollution of sin. And not only does the washing in the blood of Jesus heal our soul-diseases, it has also the effect of mitigating and removing our physical maladies. Experience abundantly proves that the exercising of a due restraint over the passions, which the Gospel requires, and the pleasures and delights of the Christian life, have a most beneficial influence on the corporal, and intellectual, as well as on the spiritual part of man; see 1 Tim. iv. 8. Moreover at the resurrection the body of the believer shall be raised up free from death and disease which are the effects of sin, 1 Cor. xv. 53.

III. "*And a certain man was there which had an infirmity thirty and eight years,*" v. 5. He was impotent, completely powerless, and had been in this pitiful condition probably almost all his life. Patiently he lay there waiting for the troubling of the water. How often had he witnessed its salutary effects on others! He had seen the blind come out of its waters with restored sight, the halt bounding like the roe, and the withered with flesh as fresh and fair as that of a child. Witnessing such wondrous cures, he had long lain there, cherishing the hope that at the next agitation of the water some one moved with compassion would help him into the water.—But, alas, how often had this hope been doomed to be disappointed? "Hope deferred," says the wise man, "maketh the heart sick." Grieved, however, as he was at each successive disappointment, he lay there waiting still. There was always a possibility that at the next troubling of the pool, he might be the fortunate individual healed, while to leave

this favoured spot was to bid farewell to every hope of recovery. Here is an example to the convicted sinner, who has not yet got rid of the burden of his sins. Wait on Jesus by diligently attending to his ordinances.—They, who seek Him early shall find Him. To forsake Him, is to lay the axe to the root of every hope. That this man was in the utmost poverty we may infer, from the fact that he had none to help him. Riches make worldly friends, but poverty drives them away.—Poverty, however, cannot separate us from the love of Jesus. In our afflictions he gives us the brightest manifestations of his love.

IV. "When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Will thou be made whole?" Jesus knew his case. He is acquainted with all our griefs and sorrows. In all our afflictions he is afflicted. The question put to the man by our Lord appears singular. Little need, one would say, to ask a man in such a state, if he would be made whole. Of course he was willing. But would it not have been stranger still, if the man had answered No? And how many are there, who are sick of a far worse disease than this man was, who are as impotent to do anything good in the sight of God as he was to walk, and who yet refuse to have Jesus heal their souls!—The impotent man misunderstanding the object of Jesus' question sought to clear himself from the imputation of any remissness in seeking a cure, v. 7.

V. "Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed and walked: and on the same day was the Sabbath," v. 8-9. At the same time that Jesus gave the command he gave him power to obey. In like manner does he act in his spiritual cures. When he bids us "believe," "make us a new heart," &c., he imparts strength by his spirit, to our otherwise dead and powerless souls, to obey his commands. The man, who was healed, was to take up his bed and walk, in order to publish abroad the love and mercy, which God had manifested towards him. What he did was, therefore, no desecration of the Sabbath-day. Observe, that when we profess to have risen from the death of sin, we should evidence the truth of our profession by walking in the Spirit.

VI. The Jews, therefore, said unto him that was cured, It is the Sabbath-day; it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed." v. 10. How ungrounded was this censure! In their zeal for external ordinances, the Jews forgot the great ends for which these were instituted, viz., the glory of God, and the good of man.

VII. "He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy

bed and walk," v. 11. From the power and goodness displayed by Jesus in his cure, the man wisely inferred that He had power also over the Sabbath.

VIII. "Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed and walk?" v. 12. In the pride and bigotry of their hearts, they wilfully shut their eyes to the astounding miracle, which had been performed. They ask not, "Who healed thee," but "Who said unto thee take up thy bed and walk." "The man wist not who it was." He was not yet personally acquainted with Jesus. The Lord found him afterwards in the temple, and revealed himself to him there. To the temple the man had doubtless gone to express his gratitude to God, for the goodness He had shown him. For many a long year had he been debarred from the privilege of worshipping in the holy place. Our Saviour warned him to sin no more lest a worse thing should befall him. He had been withheld, by the restraints of Providence, from the actual commission of sin, for a long term of years. Now, when he was restored to health, he had reason to be the more watchful. A worse thing may befall a man than thirty-eight years of utter helplessness. A lifetime of disease cannot be compared with an eternity in hell. In the simplicity of his heart, the man who had been restored to health, revealed to the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him whole. With a heart full of love and gratitude to his Lord, he never suspected that others could be capable of harbouring towards him different feelings. Mark the enmity of the natural heart against God. For this good work of the Saviour, the Jews persecuted and sought to slay him, under the pretext that the miracle was wrought on the Sabbath-day, v. 16.—Nothing would satiate their malignity but his blood.

Learn 1st. The Lord will certainly bless those who patiently wait upon him in the way of his ordinances.—Psa. xxvii. 14.

2. Works of necessity and mercy are no desecration of the Sabbath.—Matt. xii. 11. Luke xiv. 5.

3. The enmity of the natural heart against God.—Rom. vii. 7.

### TRUE HAPPINESS.

Object of my first desire,  
Jesus, crucified for me,  
All to happiness aspire,  
Only to be found in thee.

Thee to praise, and thee to know,  
Constitute our bliss below  
Thee to see, and thee to love  
Constitute our bliss above.

## BIBLICAL NOTES.

## GOD ALONE.

"Whom have I in heaven but Thee."—PSALM lxxviii. 25.

Yes, we have many a one in heaven besides God. There are the angels, clothed in immortal youth and beauty, bowing their lofty heads in profound adoration—the pillars of the great temple vibrating with the music of their thunder-psalm. And we "have" them—they are ours, we command their services—for they are commissioned as "ministering spirits to them who shall be heirs of salvation." As we look up to heaven, we cannot but rejoice that we have angels there, serving Christ, and serving us in Him and for His sake. And saints are there too, pure, perfect, and happy, bearing the Divine image, chanting the perpetual hallelujah, clothed in white robes never again to be sullied, and carrying palms in their hands, the symbol of final victory. We "have" them—ours are they still; for they wear our nature, and rejoice in the "common salvation." Ours are they; for though they have gone before us, they still sympathize with us. They are above us, but yet with us; for though they have entered the rest, they have not forgotten those who are behind them on the journey. We "have" them in heaven, and we are "followers of them, who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises." The pastor has in heaven many a soul saved under his ministry. The father has in heaven the babe that left him so early—the child has the mother that nursed him, and taught him, with clasped hands, to say, "Our Father." Nay, more, our treasure is in heaven—life, glory, happiness, service without weariness, enjoyment without monotony, fellowship with all the bright, and holy, and true, who surround the throne of God. Still, though this be true, there is a high and exclusive sense in which each believer can say, "Whom have I in heaven but thee?" In one aspect of it all we have in heaven is God. What gives radiance to the seraph but the glory of God; and what gives beauty to the saint but the image of God? If there be light in heaven, it streams from His throne; if there be felicity in heaven, it springs from nearness to it.—What you hear is the praise of God; what you see is all the creation of God.

Yet the saint, with so many in heaven to attract him, can truly say, "Whom have I in heaven but thee?" I have no one else in heaven to pray to. Gabriel I dare not invoke, and I can make supplication neither to Isaiah nor Paul. They know me not, and cannot supply my wants. To God alone—to Him on the throne do I pray, and ask for copious

and continued supplies of grace out of His inexhaustible fulness. He knows me, loves me, and individualizes me among thronging myriads of supplicants. "Whom have I in heaven but thee?"—there is no one else in heaven to save me. Angels and saints may guard the saved, but they cannot bring salvation. He is Saviour-God. It is His divine prerogative to pardon, and it can belong to none other. His Spirit alone can sanctify, and no one else can so enter the soul and chain it, renew it, and inhabit it. "Whom have I in heaven but thee?"—there is no one else in heaven to guard me. His guardianship is not periodical—"I am continually with thee;" nor is it feeble and uncertain—"Thou hast holden me by my right hand." Everywhere is He—"in Him we live and more and have our being." "The Lord is thy keeper—The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even forever more." "Whom have I in heaven but thee?"—Who else can prepare me for glory, and take me to it?—"Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel." His guidance is tender and effectual. They who listen to him do not wander. The self-guided are misguided, and they come short of glory. We are preserved in the Divine path only by the Divine hand. The first step toward glory is prompted by His grace, and the last step into it leads to welcome from Him—guidance first, and glory next—"and afterwards receive me to glory." Angels may congratulate, and saints may welcome, but the right of reception into His own dwelling-place belongs to God alone. With gracious condescension will He award it; and His Son in His name shall say, "Come, ye blessed of My Father." "Whom have I in heaven but thee?"—for, in fine, He alone can be the "portion for ever." He alone fills the soul and satisfies it. May not each reader then exclaim, "Whom have I in heaven but thee?" and surely, he ought to add, "and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee."—[Biblical Treasury.

## "TAKING THOUGHT."

"Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink."—MATT. vi. 25.

This "take no thought" is certainly an inadequate translation, in our present English, of the Greek original. The words seem to exclude and to condemn that just forward-looking care which belongs to man, and differentiates him from the beasts, which live only in the present; and most English critics have lamented the inadvertence of our authorized version, which in bidding us "take no thought" for the necessities of life, prescribes to us what is impracticable in itself, and would

to be a breach of christian duty, even were it possible. But there is no "inadvertence" here. When our translation was made, "take no thought" was a perfectly correct rendering of the original. "Thought" was then constantly used as an equivalent to anxiety or solicitous care, as let us witness this passage from Bacon: "Harris, an alderman in London, was put to trouble and died with *thought* and anxiety, before his business came to an end." Or, still better, this from one of the "Somers' Tracts" (its date is that of the reign of Queen Elizabeth): "In five hundred years only two queens have died in childbirth; Queen Catherine Parr died rather of *thought*." A better example than either of these, is that occurring in Shakespeare's "Julius Cæsar," ("take thought and die for Cæsar,") where "to take thought" is to take a matter so seriously that death ensues.—TRENCH.

### THE LITTLE SCEPTIC.

"The Lord is good to all; and His tender mercies are over all His works."—Psa. cxiv. 9.

A little Sunday schoolboy, in Buckinghamshire, belonging to an infant class, was one Sabbath observed to be in tears. He had lost a dear little brother, who was then lying dead, in consequence of having incautiously drunk some boiling water from a tea-kettle which stood on the fire. He had likewise left his father at home, in a state of extreme sorrow and dejection at this distressing calamity. The teacher was instructing his infant charge by means of the moveable alphabet; and having put together the sentence, "The Lord is good to all," he as usual required his scholars to repeat it. All obeyed their teacher save this one little boy, but he was silent. The teacher therefore asked him to repeat it with the rest; but, to his astonishment, the boy positively refused. This led to an interesting conversation. "And why will you not say, 'The Lord is good to all?'" kindly inquired the teacher. "Because," said the child, "it ain't true." "Oh! do not say so," was the reply; "the Lord is very good and kind to you, and to me, and to every one." "No, He ain't," said the boy again; "He ain't good to father. He has taken my little brother away from us, and father is at home crying about it." The teacher then explained to the little mourner that his brother was one of the lambs of Christ's flock; and that Jesus, in kindness and love, had only removed him out of a world of sorrow to His own bosom, where he would be happy and safe for ever; and that if his little scholar and his father were followers of the gentle Jesus, they also would be taken to the same happy home, and join the dear departed one, who was then in

the loving arms of his Saviour. The eyes of the child brightened at this intelligence, and he cried out, "Oh! I'll go and tell father;" and without waiting for permission, he ran home with lively joy, to tell all that his teacher had said. His father listened to his little son with the deepest interest. His words he found to be words of comfort and consolation. He wiped his weeping eyes; for he was enabled to see and to acknowledge that even in this trying dispensation there was abundant evidence of mercy and love; and that though the Lord had taken away the little one, it was nevertheless true that He was good to all, and that His tender mercies were over all His works.—[Biblical Treasury.

### THE PRINCE OF WALES.

"I am the way: . . . no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."—John xiv. 6.

During one of the travels of Queen Victoria, a little boy, like many others who had never seen a queen, was desirous of beholding so distinguished a personage, wondering if she was like other people. To accomplish this desire, he determined that he would go direct to the castle where she was residing, and ask to see her. To his mortification, however, he was stopped at the gate by the sentry, who demanded what he wanted. "I want to see the Queen," he replied. The soldier laughed at the boy, and with the butt end of his musket pushed him away, and told him to be off immediately, or he would shoot him. With a sorrowful heart the boy turned to go away, and gave vent to his grief in tears. He had not gone far when he was met by the Prince of Wales, who kindly inquired why he was crying. "I want to see the Queen," replied the boy, "and that soldier won't let me."—"Won't he?" said the Prince; "then come along with me, and I'll take you to the Queen." He accordingly took him by the hand, and condescendingly led him towards the castle.—On passing the sentinel, he, as usual, presented arms to the Prince, and the boy became terrified, and ran away, fearing that the soldier was going to shoot him. The Prince, however, soon quieted his fears, and led him past the gates into the presence of her Majesty.—The Queen, with considerable surprise, inquired of her son whom he had got there; and upon being informed of what had taken place, she laughed heartily, spoke kindly to her little visitor, and to his great delight dismissed him with a piece of money.

How beautifully does this illustrate the way of access to the Majesty of heaven!—God is surrounded by his guards of holiness and justice, and we, being sinful and polluted creatures, cannot approach Him in our own

name; but Jesus, our Mediator, God's well-beloved Son, takes us by the hand, and having free access to the great Monarch of the skies, presents us before the presence of His glory with joy. Nor do we ever retire from that presence without receiving some substantial tokens of God's kindness and love.—[Biblical Treasury.

### FOLLOW THE LIGHT.

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."—Psa. cxix. 103.

"When a boy," said a teacher in his address, a short time since, to his scholars, "I attended a Sunday school which was situated in the centre of a dark, muddy street, which was never lighted nor swept; and as we attended in the evening for instruction as well as in the day-time, it was with difficulty that the teachers could make their way through the filth, which was often piled in the road, without a light. The duty of walking before my instructors with a lantern was intrusted to me, and was one of which I was not a little proud. I carried the light as close as possible to the ground, in order that those who followed might see where to place their feet, and thus escape pollution. On one occasion, I remember, a teacher neglected to follow the light, but crossed the road, thinking that it was smoother on the other side, and presently he stepped into a pile of filth, which filled his boots, and caused him much annoyance.—'Ah!' said our old superintendent, 'that is the consequence of not following the light.—What is the use of a light, if your footsteps are not directed by it?' I have never forgotten this remark; and it has been worth more than gold to me. Whenever I behold the light of God's truth, while I am thankful for that light, I do not forget that it will be of no value to me, unless I follow it. My every footstep must be guided by it; and should I attempt to go into another path, because it is a little smoother, but to which God's word does not lead me, I shall be certain to step into the filth of sin, and occasion myself many sorrows. It is only when we follow the light that we can say, 'Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.'—Biblical Treasury.

### SOWING.

"The sower soweth the word."—Mark iv. 14.

If the latter part of March and the first half of April be rainy, the wheat, and especially the barley, sown now, and even weeks later, may yield a better harvest than what has been in the ground for the last month. In such seasons, the early crop grows so rank as

to lodge, when it is entirely spoiled. If the spring, however, should be early and dry, the late sown will fail altogether. We may now gather a harvest of our own peculiar kind from the operation going on under our eye.—The parable about sowing has here its illustration, even in its most minute details.—"Behold, a sower went forth to sow." There is a nice and close adherence to actual life in this form of expression. These people have actually come forth all the way from June (near Sidon) to this place. The expression implies that the sower, in the days of our Saviour, lived in a hamlet, or village, as all these farmers now do; that he did not sow near his own house, or in a garden fenced or walled, for such a field does not furnish all the basis of the parable. There are neither roads, nor thorns, nor stony places in such lots. He must go forth into the open country, as these have done, where there are no fences; where the path passes through the cultivated land; where thorns grow in clumps all around; where the rocks peep out in places through the scanty soil; and where also, hard by, are patches extremely fertile. Now here we have the whole four within a dozen rods of us. Our horses are actually trampling down some seeds which have fallen by this wayside, and larks and sparrows are busy picking them up. That man, with his mattock, is digging about places where the rock is too near the surface for the plough; and much that is sown there will wither away, because it has no deepness of earth. And not a few seeds have fallen among this *bellan*, and will be effectually choked by this most tangled of thorn bushes. But a large portion, after all, falls into really good ground, and four months hence will exhibit every variety of crop, up to the richest and heaviest that ever rejoices the heart even of an American farmer. Certainly nothing could be more to the point than this illustration. We, doubtless, are looking upon the very facts which suggested to Him who taught in parables the instructive lesson of the sower.—[The Land and the Book.

### REAPING A HUNDREDFOLD.

"Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundredfold: and the Lord blessed him."—Gen. xxvi. 12.

I was greatly surprised, when discussing this question on the fertile plain of Esdraelon, to hear not merely the peasants, but intelligent gentlemen, who had rented the district from government, stoutly maintain that they had themselves, and that very year, reaped more than a hundredfold from part of that plain. I could not understand it until, by accident, it came out that they had a peculiar

## PRISON ROSES.

mode of calculation. In sowing, they allow one-third of the seed for the birds, particularly the crows, which settle down upon the fields in countless flocks. Another third is supposed to be destroyed by mice and insects, and only one-third of the seed sown, actually comes to maturity. Thus a man sows three bushels, and if he reap a hundred, it is a hundredfold, according to his mode of calculation, but according to ours it would be only thirty-three. This latter rate is nearly the lowest mentioned in the parable as the yield of what He calls good ground, and that is really a first-rate crop for even such plains as Esdraelon, which, being directly below Nazareth, must have been perfectly familiar to our Lord; and, as cultivation was no doubt far more careful and skilful than it is now among these stupid fellahin, it is not at all improbable that the numbers used are in strict accordance with actual experience. Indeed, He could not have erred in this matter. We may suppose, however, that the different rates of yield had reference to various kinds of grain. Barley and wheat are sown side by side in the same field, but the former give a much heavier crop than the latter. There is a kind of durrah—white maize—sown in this same region, which often returns several hundredfold. I have been assured by respectable farmers that they have gathered more than four hundredfold of this corn.

In the time of Christ, the country was densely peopled, and the fields protected from the depredations of birds, mice and insects, and also from cattle and other animals which now trample under foot so much of the grain. It would then not be necessary to sow more than one-third as much seed as at present, in order to secure an equally heavy crop, and thus there might be realized, in favourable circumstances, a hundredfold. This is further confirmed by the fact that an extraordinary number of stalks do actually spring from a single root. Here, on this plain of Sidon, I have seen more than a hundred, and each with a head bowing gracefully beneath the load of well-formed grains. The yield was more than a thousandfold. The supposition in the parable is history in the case of Isaac, who reaped a hundredfold in Gerar, and "in the same year." There is a verbal accuracy in this statement worth noting. He received this large return the same year in which he sowed the seed. In our county—at least when I was a farmer—the seed is sown one year, and the harvest reaped the next. But these now sowing before us will reap in less than four months, and this is the general result now, as it doubtless was in the days of the patriarchs.

—[The Land and the Book.

All one's ideas of a prison are connected with the most melancholy images. Gloomy courts, narrow grated windows, impassable doors, an appearance of strict confinement pervading every arrangement—such are a few of the visions which our fancy conjures up. Everything that meets the view will, we anticipate, confirm the unpleasant associations that we necessarily form of these abodes of crime, sorrow, and suffering, and also sometimes of injured and wrongfully suspected innocence. To a case of the latter kind does our story refer. The very cause, however, that led to the circumstances which we are about to relate, proves that there may be other feelings than those already named in connection with prisons, and that however well founded our old and long-established associations with any particular thing or event may be, they are like all human things, liable to error. But to our story.

Full of all the gloomy anticipations just described, the writer one day visited the princely jail of—. For reasons that would not enlighten the reader, I forbear to disclose the name. Of all the contrasts which this place of intended reformation presented to my previous ideas of penal seclusion, the most touching was an effort of well-meant industry, which had converted a small interior court, leading too often 'from prison to judgment,' into a gay and trim parterre, blooming like any cottage-garden, with roses and other flowers.

'Prison roses!' ejaculated I, as, for the first time, I gazed on buds thus nurtured, watered, no doubt, by many a passing tear, and destined, from their awful position, directly beneath the gateway used as the place of execution, to receive the parting gaze of many a poor creature when on his way 'to that bourne whence no traveller returns.' I could not help standing spell-bound beside the most flourishing of the rose bushes, which in its June luxuriance, looked as if the bowers of Eden, and not an earthly Pandemonium, would have been its more appropriate clime. I asked permission of the turnkey, who accompanied us, to gather one of the buds, assigning as my reason the singularity of the situation in which they had grown.

'It was but a waste, unsightly bit of

ground ma'am,' said the jailor, 'when our present porter came here; but as he had been bred as gardener, and had a great deal of spare time on his hands, he asked leave to turn it into those two flower-beds which you see. Most folks say they are out of character here, and so mayhap, they may; but I scarce think you'll say so, when I tell you that that rose-tree saved an innocent person's life.'

'How so?' asked I with a natural interest.

'It's a long story, ma'am,' answered the officer, hesitatingly, 'and my time will hardly allow of my telling it; but as you go out, if you'll please to rest in the porter's lodge, you can't make the old man happier than by asking him all about it.'

We followed the turnkey's advice when we left the prison; and, prefacing my request by some compliments to the old florist on his choice collection of roses, he at once gave us the history of the bush I had been plundering.

'It's a good many years ago, ma'am, since a poor woman was confined here for being concerned in a robbery of a house intrusted to her care. She had been the gentleman's laundress for several years, and, from his opinion of her honesty, was employed by him to keep his house while the family were at the sea-side. The poor creature watched her trust faithfully, day and night, till she heard of the dangerous condition of a married daughter some miles off, when committing as she said herself, her employer's property to the care of Providence for one night, she could not resist setting off to nurse her dying child. Some villains, lurking in the neighborhood, availed themselves of the circumstance to commit a burglary, so that when Martha returned from laying a dead baby in a dead mother's arms, she found her master's house rifled of everything valuable. She was at first blamed for criminal negligence, and afterwards charged with being implicated in the robbery itself. The thieves, unable to dispose as quickly as they wished of all the stolen property, were obliged to hide some of it, and no place appeared to them so fit as poor Martha's garden, by which artifice, if discovered, the blame would naturally fall upon her. The ground was soft and wet at the time, and much as they tried to conceal their footsteps, they failed.

Murder will out, they say; and so will robbery. While Martha half-distracted between her daughter's death and the loss of her character, was crying before the magistrates engaged in the examination, her premises had been searched; and what was the poor creature's consternation to hear that two chests containing linen, had been found in her own garden! Protestations would hardly have availed her, had she been able to make them. Her going away, although perfectly natural in a mother, was so suspicious, and the whole matter so like connivance, that to jail she went, of course, as an accomplice, or as a receiver of stolen goods at the very least.

'It is at all times a hardship, ma'am—and no one knows it better than we do—to a labouring person to be shut up, deprived of all means of earning his bread, and all his little affairs going, it may be, to ruin and confusion; but what it was to Martha no one can fully conceive. Her own honest calling was knocked up, and that probably forever; but it was for her daughter's orphans that her heart yearned most bitterly. Their father was far off at sea, and four little creatures under seven, and no one to look after them, but an eldest sister hardly ten. No sooner did this good child hear of her grandmother's deplorable case, than she left her brothers and sisters with a neighbor, and walked four miles to the jail. She was quite ashamed to ring at so fine a place, and the very sight of that huge iron door made her heart die within her. I daresay she might have stood long enough, had not a countryman come in with a great sack of wheat for the treadmill, and nearly knocked over the poor little petitioner before he was aware. He was a good-natured fellow, however, and to make amends for the fright, he took her by the hand and brought her to me. 'Here's a little one crying mortally, Master Porter,' says he; 'I suppose she is a daughter to some of your jail-birds aloft, and wants to see 'em.'

'My grandmother is an honest woman, and never wronged any one; do let me go to her.'

'Where are your father and mother, child?' said I; 'they would have more sense to do her service.'

"My father's in the West Indies, sir," answered she, quite sensible, "and my poor

mother's in the church-yard. Do let me see grandmother, that I may go back and give the little ones their dinner.'

'What little ones? Are you the eldest?'

'Yes, sir, of five; and there is no one to do for them but myself, now that God has taken my mother, and wicked men my grandmother.'

'I took the child in my own hand, and sending word to a turnkey to call down old Martha to the visiting cell, I stood myself on one side the grate (you saw it of course as you went through), and the poor grandmother soon appeared on the other.—

When little Jane, that was her name—found that, instead of kissing and crying over her, she could get no nearer than a five-feet passage, with two iron gratings between, she sobbed violently, and squeezed her head against the bars, as you may have seen a poor caged bird do. Martha was nearly overcome by the sight; but she was a good pious woman, and had committed her cause to One above, so she did her best to comfort her grandchild, and gave her a world of advice as to how to manage the little ones and be a mother to them. Many a pious comfortable word has it been my lot to hear, from the outside of that wicket, to the poor deluded ones within, but it is not often that the prisoner turns preacher and comforter, as Martha did.—

'Go your ways home, my dear,' she said, 'and do your duty to the little ones there. I shall never repent having done mine to my own poor child that is gone; but I am justly punished for not getting some one to take my charge when I was away. It was tempting Providence to act as I did! However, if it be his will, something will come out on the trial to prove me innocent; if not, I bless him, and the good gentleman that built this place, that I can sit and knit, and read my Bible, in my own quiet cell, instead of being in a vile common room, hearing curses from morning till night. God bless you, Jane. You may come back and see me when you are sure the children are safe with some good neighbour; but take warning, and never desert your duty, as I did mine.'

'Little Jane cried bitterly, and promised to mind all her grandmother had said, and return whenever she could be spared.

'This was not often; but the little maid

was a general favorite, and there were many who would take their work to the desolate hearth, and rock the cradle of the motherless child, while Jane ran to comfort and attend upon her grandmother.

'The only luxury which the old woman prized was the proverbial one of her profession—a cup of good tea; but this her confinement prevented her earning, and though cheerful and contented over our wholesome prison fare, she missed her accustomed cordial. Little Jane guessed as much, and one day as she was going out took courage from my hearty good-will to her to say how much she wished, if possible to make a sixpence in any way.

'Make a sixpence, child,' said I, 'and why? She told me with some hesitation, and I answered, 'Jane, I am not rich, but I could give you sixpence for so good a purpose I daresay, and so I will if a thought that has just come into my head fails. To-morrow the assizes begin, although your poor grandmother's trial will not come on till the end. There will be plenty of company in the town, and balls in the evening, and no doubt the ladies will like nosegays for them. I'll give you some every day from my garden, and you shall stand at the door of the King's Arms, and try to sell them; and if you do, a happy girl you'll be to carry your poor grandmother an ounce of tea of your own earning. My roses are the best and earliest in the place, thanks to these high walls, though their shelter is none of the kindest. This bush here'—the one you've got in your hand, ma'am,—'is of a rare sort. I had it from my old master's garden in the park, and there are not ten of the sort of this tree to be found in all England. See, there will be a half a dozen blown on it to-morrow.

'On the morrow Jane came, dressed in her best neat brown stuff frock, with a clean white apron and a straw bonnet of her own plaiting. She was afraid to encounter the crowds about the doors of the inn; and to say the truth, on second thoughts, I durst not send her there, for fear of being rode over or knocked down in the bustle; so I advised her rather to ply her trade at the New Spa, where I thought the young ladies were likely to take shelter from the crowd. She did so, and had not stood long with her modest face and civil manners, offering her nice nosegays, when she at-

tracted the attention of a tall elderly gentleman, who with his two daughters, had come to drink the waters. 'Ha,' said the ladies, 'there is a pretty little country maid selling roses, and very choice ones they are. What say you girls to a bouquet, to remind you of home? Pray, child,' asked he, looking at the flowers very sharply, for he was a bit of a florist, 'Where did this Rose Unique grow?'

"In the county jail, please your honor," answered the little girl, all of a tremble, for he was a quick gentleman, and spoke as if he thought she might have stolen them. 'The door keeper gave them me when I went to to see poor grandmother.'

"Prison roses?" cried one of the young ladies, gazing curiously at the pretty unconscious flowers; "who would have thought you could thrive in such a climate?"

"Is your grandmother a prisoner?" asked the old gentleman, quickly but not unkindly. And for what offence?

"For going to see mother die," answered little Jane, innocently. 'Mother went to heaven and took my brother along with her; and poor grandmother is in jail, because wicked men stole her master's things while she was absent.'

"She should have got some one to watch for her," said he; but if what you say be true, the case seems a cruel one too. How came she to be accused of the robbery?"

"Because the things were found in her garden, though she knows not how they came there.'

"What shameful villainy!" exclaimed the young ladies, for the little girl's story had interested them deeply.

"Very unlucky," said the gentleman, rubbing his forehead; "is there no one here can vouch for your grandmother's character?"

"Sure, sir, every one can," answered Jane, in her simple way. 'There's no one in—— but knows old Martha Wilkins.'

"Wilkins!" exclaimed the gentleman. 'Wilkins!' screamed out both ladies. 'Can it be our old nurse Martha? Did she ever live in Dorsetshire? Was her husband a game-keeper? What family had she?'

"Little Jane knew nothing about matters which happened before she was born, but she could answer the last question in a

way that settled all. 'One daughter only, if you please, sir,—my poor mother that's gone; and that made her so anxious to see her dear Mary Jane before she died.'

"Mary Jane! No doubt remains," cried these two young ladies, whose joint names had been bestowed on nurse's child.—'O papa, let us go to the prison to see dear Martha; it must be her.'

"Patience, children," answered the old gentleman, who seemed, however, as glad as any of them. There will be a sad bustle to-day at the jail; and besides, to see Martha with any comfort, we must have an order. I'll speak to the high-sheriff by-and-by, when the court breaks up; and in the meantime I see the little girl is anxious to be off.'

"Please your honour," said Jane, 'I'm in no great hurry, only—only—I've four miles to walk, and the children's dinner to get, and grandmother's tea to buy besides.'

"So it was to buy tea for your grandmother, you took to selling roses, good girl! Here's a shilling instead of a sapphire; run to the jail and tell Martha that Mr. Dawes of Ashleigh, is here to befriend her; it will do her more good than all the tea in China.'

"And here's something for yourself," cried Miss Mary, 'for being so dutiful.'

"And something to buy toys for the children," cried Miss Jane to her pretty namesake. And she ran off as gaily to prison as if it had been a palace.

"Martha shed tears of joy when she heard of the unexpected arrival of her old Master, and his meeting with her grandchild. She acknowledged the hand of Providence in it, as she did in everything else; and cried more when she saw the grandest gentleman in Dorsetshire stooping to visit her in her cell, and his nicely dressed daughters to sit on her clean but lowly bed, than she had done when she first heard of her calamity.

"The good old woman was saved the agitation even of an acquittal by Mr. Dawes' exerting himself to have the matter thoroughly investigated. This led to the charge being brought home to some burglars already in the jail for other offences who, after some little delay, admitted the innocence of Martha, and the circumstances under which they hid the linen in her

garden. It might otherwise have gone hard with Martha in this world, at a time when our law was more severe than it is now; for no one is infallible, not even judges; and appearances were sadly against her. But 'all's well that ends well.' Mr. Dawes took her out of jail in his own coach, and settled her in a cottage upon his estate. Jane's father is married again to a good sort of motherly woman, and she herself waits upon the two young ladies. They come every year to drink the waters, and the first thing they do is to send Jane for one of my prison roses.—The story has made my bush famous, and I thought you would like to hear it, as you seemed to admire the flowers so much.—I wish you could see Jane's cheeks when I tell it; no roses in England could match them. You'll excuse an old man's freedom, ladies; but Jane and my roses make me always forget myself."

"We at last run no risk of forgetting either," my good friend, "said I, cordially, "and may we all remember that from very trifling acts of duty and industry, under the blessing of God, important benefits may be made to flow."—*Sunday Teacher's Treasury.*

## Revival Intelligence

### RANGOON.

We find in the *American Baptist Missionary Magazine* an interesting account of a revival of religion in Rangoon, which began with the officers and men of an American frigate, and has extended to numbers of others of different races:—

"On Saturday, the 29th of September last, the ship 'R. B. Forbes,' bearing its precious freight, anchored in the harbour of Rangoon. Before leaving the wharf in Boston, an earnest desire had been expressed for the conversion of the officers and men, and as she dropped down the harbor and sailed out on her voyage, prayer to God on their behalf was offered without ceasing. That prayer was accompanied, on the part of the missionaries, with public and social worship, and an earnest use of all those means which faith in God prompts, and which have ever been blessed in bringing men to a knowledge of the truth. An unusual solemnity soon became apparent, followed at length by earnest inquiry on the part of the captain and officers, which rapidly spread through the ship, till scarcely a man remained unmoved; and, before the end of the voyage was reached, out of some twenty, representing seven different nations, all but two or three gave cheering evidence of having passed from death unto life. The announcement of these facts gave a fresh impulse to the Christian portion of the community, missionaries, and others, resident at Rangoon; and at once, joining their efforts with the new comers,

they opened the mission chapel, and for weeks in succession, night after night, waited on God. They prayed, preached, exhorted, examined converts, directed inquirers to the Saviour, in a word, enjoyed a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Indeed, a revival had before been in progress, if earnest prayer, faithful labor, and the Spirit's power in the conversion of men, are the signs of a revival. On Sunday, Sept. 30th, the day after the arrival of the *Forbes*, we learn that six Burmans were baptized in the river, at Mr. Ingalls' station, and one hour later, seven Karens in the mission premises at Kemendine, a part of the ship's crew being present, and with tearful joy witnessing, for the first time, the administration of the ordinance. Of the course of events from this time let brother Stevens speak:—"I have no doubt other pens have communicated the particulars of the interesting things which we have been experiencing in connection with the *R. B. Forbes*. The very name of the ship has a fragrance. In the community generally it brought immediate joy, with its cargo of ice; but to us it brought co-labourers, and most of all, it brought our Master Himself. We heard and we saw that He was on board, and we earnestly solicited that He would come among us on shore; and our hearts have been poured forth in gratitude that He was entreated of us, and has greatly refreshed our spirits. Meetings were held every evening in the chapel for prayer, and exhortation, and preaching, and there was evidence of the blessed Spirit's power, awakening and converting souls, and quickening others who had long been backward. Four Sabbaths in succession we have been permitted to visit the beautiful waters of the large royal tank, to bury in baptism joyful converts. On the first Sabbath, four military officers and one young married woman were baptized by brother Rose. Then followed Ko En, our native pastor, with six Burmese candidates; and, lastly, brother Bronson led down into the liquid grave the captain, two mates, and eleven men of the *R. B. Forbes*. "It was never so seen" before in Rangoon, and deep impressions were made on the holders. The next Sabbath I had the privilege of leading into the water thirteen more candidates, male and female, seven from the military force, and the rest from the people of the town. The Sabbath following, brother Van Meter baptized two other men of the ship, and last Sabbath brother Rose two more men from the army. I am happy to add that others still show evidence of the Spirit's work on their hearts, and are rejoicing in a sense of pardon. Thus at Rangoon, in five weeks, fifty-five persons were buried with Christ in baptism, and to this number others have since been added."

## VOLUNTARY AGENTS.

We have resolved that all who act as voluntary agents, and who send us five subscribers for the Good News with five dollars will be entitled to a copy of the Good News for one year.

All who send us Thirty names for the Evangelizer with seven dollars and a half and who will take the trouble of distributing the papers to the subscribers they procure, will receive from us the parcel of Thirty post paid, and will also be entitled to a copy of the Good News for one year.

We intend to publish a pamphlet, which will be ready about the end of this month, on the **NEW HEAVENS AND THE NEW EARTH**

BY THE REV. P. GRAY OF HINGSTON,

Which will be sold at 10 cents per copy.

The Subject is interesting and important, and as it is desirable that the number struck off should accord with the demand, we will be obliged by colporteurs, agents, and friends, who may wish to co-operate in the circulation, informing us how many copies they would endeavor to circulate.

### THE GOOD NEWS.

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

It contains:

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

Back numbers can be supplied.

### THE EVANGELIZER.

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

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

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

#### Gratis Circulation.

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

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

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

### The Gospel Message.

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

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

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

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

For the gratuitous circulation of Evangelizer and Gospel Message.

### Donations

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

### Colporteurs.

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

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

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

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Prescott, C.W.

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