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THE GREY HAIRS.

BY THE REV. THOS. HENDERSON, PERTH.

"Grey hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not."—Hosea viii. 9.

Ephraim was the leading tribe of that portion of the Hebrew people which formed the kingdom of Israel, after the disruption in the time of Rehoboam.

"Backsliding Israel" mingled with the heathen, and learned their works and because of their departure from God they ultimately perished off the good land. The present is a striking representation of their condition, while yet in Palestine. In "grey hairs," we recognize the symbol of old age, and we readily associate with them the ideas of diminished strength, the dim eye, the tottering steps, the nerveless grasp of the man whose youthful joys have passed, whose boasted strength is gone, and who has come near the time when "the silver cord shall be loosed, the golden bowl be broken, the pitcher be broken at the fountain, and the wheel broken at the cistern, the dust shall return to the earth as it was, and the spirit to God who gave it." When the work of gradual decay will be consummated, and the worn out frame repose in the tomb.

Grey hairs which thus in nature betoken decay, are aptly used to signify spiritual declension and the figure is instructive. Unless when accidental circumstances operate upon the body either by immediately crushing its powers or fanning the flame which burns them up, the decay of strength is gradual, to the man himself imperceptible and often more distinctly marked by his neighbors and acquaintances than by him. Here the analogy between natural decay and spiritual is close. The prostration of spiritual strength is in most cases gradual, and often is its unhappy subject startled into a sense of his actual position through

the observation of others or by some fearful act of impiety into which in his wanderings from God he has been betrayed, and which, seen by the twilight that yet rests upon his soul exhibits his true position, produces complete impenitency, leads to a divorce from holiness, or, on the other hand to the mournful cry, "O that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me, when his lamp shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness; as I was in the days of my youth when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle," Job xxix. 2-4; and to the expression of sorrow because of departure from God: "I have gone astray like a lost sheep: seek thy servant for I do not forget thy commandments." Happy is it when thus the soul returns and finds afresh the peace of God which passeth all understanding.

The soul enriched with the hope of immortality enjoys the prospect of an eternal state of bliss, where is incorruptibility, where it will range over new and brighter fields, and find far higher pleasures than are ever culled in this sin-smit world. Such a view of the future gives to any sign of premature decay an aspect of sadness which cannot be considered without causing the deepest sorrow.

We look on physical decay with sorrow, but especially are we so affected where such decay is premature and the sun of life, rapidly advances to the west, while it is yet noon; but in this there is nothing at all to compare with the decay of piety in the soul, and its hindrance thereby in reaching to the stature of the perfect man in Christ Jesus, the blasting of hopes once cherished

that the soul would pursue its way to an eternity of holiness, and rise to never dying joys in the fair land where death is unknown, no sorrows becloud the brow, bedim the eye, nor corrode the heart.

Reflections like these give interest to our present theme and ought to excite us to earnest inquiry, as to our individual spiritual state, and if decay in piety is discoverable in any degree lead us at once to the foundation of life, to the Great Physician, with confession and contrition to the throne of grace, and if any man have sinned, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

WHAT IS SPIRITUAL DECLENSION ?

Those who have professed the name of Christ and devotion to his service, have appropriate objects of pursuit and duties which devolve upon them. Objects after which they ought continually to seek; duties which they ought untiringly to perform. Declension consists in forsaking these. In removing from God instead of seeking continued fellowship with him, and in pursuing those things which are opposed to His will. Thus Israel's declension is described as rebelling against God—forgetting him, being alienated from him—as the committing of two great evils—forsaking Him the fountain of living waters, hewing out cisterns, broken cisterns which can hold no water. Spiritual declension is going on when the affections are fastening on earthly things, rather than on things above, when the christian is forgetting that he is a citizen of heaven, and is found acting merely as a citizen of the world, conforming to the world's principles and the world's fashions.

The decay of physical strength is not without its signs, neither is the decline of spirituality without its tokens. These are varied as are the circumstances and conditions of men; and in their degree from incipient decay to open viable declension

or apostacy. To a few of these tokens let us turn our serious attention, and if any are discoverable in us let us not perpetuate our folly by saying, "Peace! peace!" when there is not peace," but go straight to our only refuge from final despair—let us repair to the only source of cure, that the wound may be probed to the very core, and healed but not slightly with the "balm of Gilead and by the physician there."

One of the earlier marks of declension is remissness or neglect of the secret duties of religion. "Apostacy begins in the closet," and the hearts of back-sliders, when faithful, give painful and abundant evidence of this truth. These duties may not be wholly omitted, and yet their observance become nothing more than a mere form to quiet the conscience—a formal prayer—a hasty glance at the scriptures, in both of which the All-seeing views himself slighted and mocked; self-examination may be changed into a mere cursory look at what may seem the bright side of conduct and no longer be a faithful inquiry as to how matters stand between God and the soul, accompanied with the deep and earnest cry that "God would search us and try our thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in us, and turn us, and make us to walk in the way everlasting." Guilty sloth may induce this remissness by causing the desire for a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep, when instead of thus acting, our souls should wake up to the contemplation of the Divine goodness to learn the lesson of his will and to call upon His name who "causeth the outgoings of the morning and of the evening to rejoice over us." Love of company may lead to the lessening of our time for attention to personal, secret religion, and the giving to God the dregs of time rather than that which he rightfully claims, and in denying which we wound our own souls, and pierce ourselves through with many sorrows. Pursuits in themselves laudable, may

prove a hindrance. Communication with our fellow-men can never equal in importance, and ought not to be suffered to prevent communication with the Father of our Spirits. Books may tempt, but none can but suffer loss who neglect the book of God, the lamp of heaven, the directory of the saints. The christian, who from whatever cause, has in the closet become cold, formal, uneasy, or who has forsaken its sacred precincts, may still mingle with the people of God, bear still the name of disciple, but his lamp is going out, "grey hairs are here and there upon him."

The evil not stayed, finds its way into the social duties of the church, and the "grey hairs" unnoticed, it may be, by him that wears them, appear in assembly of the saints. There the delight that once was felt, the hallowed joy when it was said, "Let us go into the house of the Lord," is past—sitting under the droppings of the sanctuary the soul is unblest—docility and simplicity give way to carping criticism, and the pride that goeth before a fall. No longer are waters drawn with joy from the wells of salvation, the Sabbath is a weariness, the sacred song kindles no flame of devotion in the heart, the voice of prayer is a burden, and the spread table of the Lord inspires not those thoughts and feelings that once thrilled the soul, when redeeming love displayed its banner. In the better days now gone the soul entered the courts of God's house, hungering and thirsting after righteousness and was satisfied, but now, alas, while abundant as ever are the provisions, the plate is diseased. Sweet as "ever is the river, the streams of which make glad the city of our God," but the taste is changed, and what in spiritual youth gave delight, fails to give joy, when "grey hairs are here and there."

The signs of spiritual declension which we have noticed, tell of diminished love to Him who loved and gave himself for us; failure here, leads to failure in love to the

brethren. Christian affection cannot be sustained independently of love to God. Brotherly love springs out of God love, and when God love is absent, groundless jealousies find easy access to the mind, evils existing among God's people, are magnified. In the absence of the spirit of Christ, patience, forbearance, long-suffering, and forgiveness are no longer manifested, the company and interests of God's children are no longer regarded, and unholy temper and disposition tell the truth, "grey hairs are here and there."

With all this going back from God, attention to worldly business or pleasure will increase. God and eternity lessen and the world and time grow in the estimation of the backslider. A worldly spirit will be manifested. Without sure footing the man will be disquieted, and vain jangling and unprofitable disputation, will take the place of holy converse and words that minister grace to the hearers. Affectionate, well-meant counsel will meet with cold contempt. Once the wounds of a friend were deemed faithful—a precious ointment—but the heart has become hard, and hence the waters of penitence flow not.

To accommodate the feelings possessed with a profession of religion, false views as to what is implied in that profession will be readily cherished; former love will now appear as mere fanaticism, former zeal, enthusiasm, closeness of walk with God and punctual attention to Christian duties as narrow bigotry and pharisaism: and the soul may become deceived by the flattering thought, that the views now held are more philosophical and sound than those which rejoiced the soul when it began its religious life, and had the dew of its youth. But alas! the soul is deceived; instead of gathering strength, "grey hairs are here and there."

The course of the backslider might be traced to the terminus too often, alas, reached—the adoption of a semi-injidel

creed; a seat in the scorner's chair; open apostacy, confirmed infidelity, or atheism. How awful is such abandonment of the good confession, once witnessed and often declared, as he who is now without, was wont to join in holy ordinances, and sit at the Lord's table with those who thus declare that they are on the Lord's side.

One may seriously swerve from the right in feeling and action, and yet be in deplorable ignorance of his own state. Oft has the backslider been thus: "Gray hairs here and there upon him, yet *he knoweth* not." He has been led aside by a deceived and deceiving heart. His first error lay in failing to keep it with all diligence. O how many evils flow from men failing to prove, to examine their own selves; from want of this a man "falleth while he thinketh he standeth," and imagines himself to be rich and increased with goods, and having need of nothing, while he is poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked. Thinks himself in the vigour of youth, while grey hairs are here and there upon him. The first step from the right way may have been taken with some measure of reluctance—been only partial—allowed for once. A second time error has met with less resistance—the road has become more and more easy; the heart has become hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. "The heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked;" under its fatal direction many a soul has been led far from the ways of righteousness that once ran well. And he knoweth not, for he has not considered the woful distance to which he has receded from God. This ignorance can form no excuse, nay, is itself the very guilt of the backslider, who refuses the counsel of God, and will not consider his ways.

Let us solemnly consider this subject as it bears on our individual responsibility, duty, and privilege.

Let each one examine and prove his own self, take not a hasty glance at his position,

but make deep and searching inquiry as to how matters stand with us in the sight of God. Religion is a personal concern, and "every tree that beareth not good fruit shall be cut down." The account may soon be called for. Do you stand in readiness to give account of yourself to God? The midnight cry may soon be heard—are your lamps trimmed and ready? O let this form matter of deep heart-searching. Am I progressing or receding? growing in grace or drawing back? keeping the end in view or following a present evil world?

BE WATCHFUL OVER YOUR OWN HEARTS.
You may be tempted—many have been—to let the Master's will stand, that you may follow the will of another. The tempter may whisper, "It is a little matter." But beware, apostacy in thousands has begun just where you stand; they listened and were undone. One grey hair appeared, and then another, until the process of decay seemed complete. Trifle not with the convictions of conscience. Grieve not the Spirit lest he depart, and your sin separate between God and your soul, and darkness and despair—the very gloom of perdition—gather around you.

It is said that in the rebuilding of Jerusalem, the priests "built every man over against his own house." Every man's *first* care ought to be his own state, yet *not his only care*. The Christian is to watch over his brethren, "looking diligently that no man fail of the grace of God." Is there not among modern Christians a woful defect? They can and do talk to each other about prosperity and health, and yet but little about spiritual prosperity, and the health which springs from God's presence. How often is *religious conversation* an *ivy* thing, left to the last, or left altogether. When brethren seem remiss in the performance of spiritual duty, or present in any form the "grey hairs" of declining piety, it is surely our duty then to speak with and counsel them. We may have some reasons

to dread a cold reception, but what of that if we gain a brother. We may meet scorn, contempt, and the charge of officiousness, but would not a wise man dare these and more, rather than the requirement of blood at his hand? If any fall from his steadfastness and make shipwreck of faith, are we not verily guilty concerning our brother, if we have failed to warn, to instruct and counsel?

The necessity for a revival of religion is extensively acknowledged, but never till deep heart-searching pervades the church will a revival be general and continuous. What is needed is not an occasional convulsive heaving of the body—not mere excitement, but the putting on of the Church's strength—a continued flow of holiness through its members, which would again produce a deep and powerful impression on the world around. Such a revival must be preceded by self-examination, deep contrition and humiliation before God. Let each one seek to discover whether he be indeed walking with, as well as openly professing, the Saviour's name. If we are found backslidden, "Come, and let us return unto the Lord."

YOUNG CHRISTIANS, how important is the course on which you have entered. You are not weary. May you never, never grow weary of the yoke of Christ. Yet you are surrounded by many temptations. You know not the sorrows of the backslider. "My soul, come not thou into their secret," may be your prayer, as you have looked at the "grey hairs." Forsake not your secret communings with your own heart—your lessons of piety drawn from the sacred word. Forsake not the companionship of them that fear God. Beware of those whose religion consists in mere speculation, who rejoice in unsettling the faith of the young convert. "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is." Remember, "if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of

the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." Ah, whither shall the apostate go in the day Jesus descends to judge the earth? Whither shall they flee who were baptized in His name, and sat at His table, and after all turned their back upon the Saviour and His cause. I tremble at the thought of any of you being at the left hand in that day. Keep in continual, daily, hourly prospect the promised joy. Work out your salvation with fear and trembling. Abiding in Christ you are safe for ever; abide then in His love, and keep in memory the gospel you have received.

Reader, are you conscious of departure from God? "Return, O wanderer, return;" the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth still from all sin. He invites you back. "Return unto me, and I will return unto you." Shelter in no false refuge, draw comfort from no distorted view of divine truth. Remember that the "perseverance of the saints" is *not perseverance in sin*, in rebellion against God, in opposing His will.

Go as one who deserves not mercy but judgment. "Repent and pray God that your sins may be forgiven." Go to Immanuel, mighty to save to the uttermost. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

"To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts."

THE BIBLE.

This book unfolds Jehovah's mind,
 This voice salutes in accents kind,
 This friend will all your need supply,
 This fountain sends forth streams of joy;
 This mine affords us boundless wealth,
 This good Physician gives us health,
 This sun renews and warms the soul,
 This sword both wounds and makes us whole,
 This letter shows our sins forgiven,
 This guide conducts us safe to heaven,
 This charter has been sealed with blood,
 This volume is the Word of God.

J. INOVA.

BUSINESS A MEANS OF GRACE.

We often hear Christians complain of their leanness and emptiness, and attribute it to their business. If they are correct in the cause of their want of religious enjoyment, then, either they are engaged in a wrong business, or they are pursuing it in a wrong manner. No lawful business—and a Christian cannot engage in any other—pursued in a proper manner, will injure the religious enjoyments of the child of God. He that has the love of God in his heart, and does his whole duty each day toward God and man, will never find occasion to charge the blame of his leanness to his business. The true Christian, who does all that he does to the glory of God, is never more happy than when full of business. Let him connect his business with God; let him work for God every day in the week, and consecrate all his powers to the furtherance of his cause in the earth, and he will find that his business, instead of being a hindrance, will be a help—a real means of grace to him. Instead of letting his business swallow up his religion, his religion will swallow up his business. To all who are crippled in their religious enjoyment by their daily callings, we would recommend the course pursued by Normand Smith:—

“When roused to a more entire consecration to God, falling in with the common notion that a life of secular business is incompatible with a life of eminent usefulness and piety, he seriously purposed to abandon it. But more scriptural views led him to continue in business, consecrating it to God. He put it on record the ‘purpose to engage in my business that I may serve God in it, and with the expectation of getting to give.’ From that time it was observable by all who knew him, that he made rapid progress in religion. There was a fervour and engagedness of spirit, a purity and elevation of aim, that could not be misunderstood or concealed. He rose towards heaven like the lark of the morning. From that time he found no tendency in his worldly engagements to chill his piety, or enchain his affections to the earth. His business became a means of grace, and helped him forward in the Divine life, just as truly as reading the Scriptures and prayer.”

DO YOU KNOW JESUS?

I was walking hastily along the crowded streets, in one of the great cities of the North, during the past summer, when my steps were suddenly arrested by a voice behind me, uttering the words, “*Sir, do you know Jesus?*” For the time and place it was a strange question. It was high noon, and many were hastening to the Exchange near by. It was in the centre of a busy thoroughfare, through which hundreds were passing, each intent on his own particular errand. In the midst of the temples of Mammon, and of the throngs of his worshippers, I heard the strange thrilling question, “*Sir, do you know Jesus?*”

Stranger still, when I turned to look upon the person who uttered those words, I could not fix on any one of the numbers behind me as the speaker. I did not see either, to whom it had been spoken. If it had fallen from the clear sky above me, it could not have less personality about it. The air had borne it to my ear, but from whom I could not discern, and the words so unusual in that place and at that time, seemed to have become doubly so, that their speaker had so quickly vanished.

Reader, do you know Jesus? Do you know His power to save from sin, and the fear of impending judgment? Do you know how free His mercy is; how full His grace? You must know Him or perish. You must know Him, or miss the blessedness of the eternal life.—Rev. M. B. Grier.

IT IS FINISHED.

Christ has done the mighty work;
Nothing left for us to do,
But to enter on his toil,
Enter on his triumph too.

He has sowed the precious seed,
Nothing left for us unsown;
Ours is to reap the fields,
Make the harvest-joy our own.

His the pardon, ours the sin,—
Great the sin, the pardon great;
His the good and ours the ill,
His the love and ours the hate.

Ours the darkness and the gloom,
His the shade-dispelling light;
Ours the cloud and his the sun,
His the dayspring, ours the night.

His the labour, ours the rest,
His the death and ours the life;
Ours the fruits of victory,
His the agony and strife.—*Bonar.*

THE CURE OF SCHISM.

"Schisms" are not peculiar to the Church of the present day, nor are they "the result of Protestantism," as some allege, unless Protestantism is understood to represent that doctrine which is termed "the right of private judgment;" but which might be described rather as the absolute necessity for each man to believe the truth for himself, because he himself sees it to be true, and cannot be satisfied that another man see and believe for him. This "doctrine," which is essential to the reception of any truth whatever, must necessarily, of course, open the way to error, just as the possession of reason, which is essential to a man's thinking at all, must, in every case, involve the risk of his thinking wrong.

But we know of a church founded by an apostle, presided over for a time by an apostle, which was full of schisms. This was the Church of Corinth. (See 1 Cor., first three chapters.)

These schisms were marked by "differences of mind and judgment;" and by "envying, strife, and division." Its "Protestantism" may, no doubt, have occasioned this.

But along with these, and partly their cause, partly their effect, there was a warm attachment to particular ministers. From the sameness of human nature in every age, we can quite understand how each party would glory in the minister around whom it rallied: "We are of Apollos!" some may have said. "We do not admire Peter. He is too much of a Jew for us; besides, he denied his Lord, and dissembled along with Barnabas at Antioch. We prefer our minister even to Paul. He is a much more eloquent man; of a much more commanding figure and appearance; and how profound he is in his knowledge of the Scriptures!" "We are of Paul," cried others; "for he was chosen specially by Christ; and he has been honoured by Christ more than all; and does not the Church of Corinth owe its very existence to his preaching and labours? It is a shame to belong to any other!" "We cling to Peter!" said a third party; "he lived with Christ when he was on earth, saw his miracles, heard his words, was treated after the resurrection with special love, and received from him a special commission to feed his sheep. Apollos is no apostle; and as for Paul, he persecuted the Church, and confesses himself that he is not meet to be called an apostle. Apollos is good, Paul better, but Peter is best!" "We belong to neither," others might have boasted: "your divisions are so many, your differences so great, that we have retired from all your meetings in weariness; we are of Christ only, and call no man master but him; you should all join the Christians." Such were some of the schisms;

and to the schismatic Paul, said: "Ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I of Apollos; are ye not carnal?"

Paul desired to heal those schisms, and to bring the members of the Church to one mind. How did he try to effect this?

Had he been a "Roman Catholic," he might have said—"Why thus divided? Because you are not building on the one true foundation, which is Peter! Do you not understand the meaning of his name, *Cephas*, or the Rock, given to him by the Lord, and intended to teach all Christians that the temple of the Church was to be built on *this* rock, and this only; against which the gates of hell cannot prevail. Therefore, you who say, 'I am of Cephas,' are right; all others are schismatics." Never, apparently, had a man a better opportunity of revealing to the world this great secret of unity than Paul had, if such was his faith, especially when he compares the Church to a building (1 Cor. iii. 9-11), and speaks of a foundation-stone: "As a wise master-builder," he says, "I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. . . . For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is"—*Cephas*, or the rock? No! but "*Jesus Christ*." Not one word of *Cephas* as the centre of unity! Strange silence for a "Roman Catholic" saint or apostle!

Had Paul been a "High Churchman," full of profound veneration for the sacraments, and viewing with deep awe the mystery of sacramental grace, we can understand how he would have spoken to the schismatic Corinthians of the vast importance of their submitting to absolute apostolic authority, and of the "awful powers with which God's ministers had been vested, of regenerating souls by the waters of baptism!" and how "such a clergy should command their unqualified obedience." If these, or anything like these, were Paul's sentiments, and such as we are every day familiar with, it is not easy, to say the least of it, to account for his language to the Corinthians. What does he say of the exalted privilege of being able to baptize? "I thank God I baptized none of you, save *Crispus* and *Gaius*." Strange words from a "High Churchman!" or, we may add, an equally "High" Baptist! "I baptized also the house of *Stephanas*: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other." Strange forgetfulness on such a supposed centre-point of Church unity. "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel!" Strange idea of the relative importance of preaching and baptizing for a "High Churchman" to hold!

And as to the "commanding authority" of the apostles, merely because they were apostles,

apart from the commanding authority of the eternal truth which they "commended" to the conscience and judgment of their hearers, Paul asks: "Who, then, is Paul, and who is Apollos?" Methinks we hear some exclaim: "O, these great men were the greatest, the —." But we will not take up space by repeating the laudations with which some would cry up their authority, with a view merely of magnifying the mere official authority of the clergy. But what says Paul himself? He says they were only "ministers by whom ye believed." It was not the minister who did good, but the truth which he ministered, and which he had received from another. It was not the man who sowed the seed, or the basket which held it, that gave the crop; but the living seed itself. Hence he adds: "So, then, neither is he that planteth anything, nor he that watereth!" What? Neither presbyter nor bishop.—neither Paul nor Apollos anything? Strange words, again we say, from a "High Churchman!" whether Episcopalian, Presbyterian, or of any other denomination, for "High Churchmen" are common to all. Yet not strange from Paul, who knew how true his words were, and that not man, but God, was "everything," who gave the increase.

What, then, was Paul's method of curing schism, and of making men truly one, who had been "divided?"

He directed every eye, and every heart, and every spirit, to one object, JESUS CHRIST, the personal Saviour, the centre and source of unity; in fellowship with whom all men find their fellowship with each other!

"We preach Christ crucified." "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." These are his declarations. And his conclusion from this great and blessed principle is just what we might expect: "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." "Let no man glory in men: for all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come: all are yours; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

Professing Christians would do well to weigh Paul's cure of schism. Our divisions of heart and alienation of spirit have been unworthy of educated men; and to the citizens of a free state, utterly subversive of the whole principles of Protestantism. What! not willing to hear the gospel preached from the lips of a minister of another church? Not willing to remember Jesus with him? Not willing even to be on kind, or, perhaps, speaking terms with him? Such things not only have been, but are; and while, thank God, they are repudiated and detested by men of all churches, they are common; we fear, in many districts. No wonder

Roman Catholics point at our frequent boasting of Protestant "oneness in all essentials," and ask with triumph, how it happens, then, that we are such enemies on mere non-essentials? How is it that we pretend to be one when attacking Papists, and then turn our backs on each other when left alone? No wonder the High Churchman asks Presbyterians in Scotland when they attack him to be charitable, and to forgive him if he never enters our Presbyterian churches, hears our clergy, partakes of our sacraments, when so very many among ourselves practically excommunicate each other! Can he love us more than we love ourselves? Shall we ignore the ministry and ordinances of Presbyterian brethren, and must he, forsooth, acknowledge them? No wonder the infidel lecturer describes to crowds of intelligent mechanics, in vivid and powerful language, the spectacle presented by Christian clergy and congregations, and asks, with a smile of derision, if *this* is a religion of love which they see around them?—if these men believe the gospel?—if Christians have really more kindness and courtesy than "publicans and sinners?" Worse than all, no wonder our churches languish, and the ground is thirsty under our feet, and the heavens as brass over our heads; and men are asking with pain, why the ministry is not producing more spiritual fruit? The churches are, no doubt, doing much. We have meetings, associations, and organizations, with no end of committees, resolutions, and motions; we raise large sums of money; we have large congregations; and we take care that the world shall know all we are doing, and that our left hand shall not long remain ignorant of what the right is about; we are bold, forward, impetuous, and not over scrupulous in attacking all who differ from us. Yet all this, and much more, we can do from pride, vanity, love of party, love of power, the spirit of proselytism, and the like. But where is that which man alone cannot do, and God alone can? Where is the growth of the living Church from influences unseen but felt, apparently weak yet omnipotent, as the showers of spring on the mown grass, or as the warming, quickening, and cheering sunlight? Where is the deep, all-pervading, increasing love to Jesus Christ; and the manifestation of his love in us to the Church and to the world? Where the love that seeketh not her own, but beareth all things, endureth all things, and is not easily provoked? Where the carrying of one another's burden, and each man esteeming his neighbour better than himself, and pleasing him to his good for edification? Where the assembling of ourselves as Christians of all churches, to consider one another, and provoke to love and good works?

Are there not districts in Scotland that

especially in the North, where, in this nineteenth century, the Presbyterians are more alienated from one another by fanatical hate than are sincere and pious Protestants from Roman Catholics in Tipperary or Connaught? Who is to blame for this barbarism?

Surely our schisms may be healed, if there be a Saviour to heal them!

Without even becoming one Church outwardly (which is, comparatively speaking, unimportant), we might be one inwardly, and enjoy more of the blessedness of loving and being loved. We might in God's sight be better, though in man's sight we might *do* less. If we are ever to deliver our brother from evil, correct error in him, and lead him to all truth, we must first love him. In one word, all will go well with us, our schisms will be healed, our envyings cease, our carnal boastings and gloryings depart, when we can lay down *self* at the Cross, and resolve, like Paul, "to know nothing save JESUS CHRIST, and him crucified!"

"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper who love thee. For my brethren and companion's sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee! Because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good."—*Rev. Norman Macleod, D.D.*

HOW SAFE!

How safe is a sinful man who has simply, wholly cast himself on Jesus! The Redeemer loves His own with a love that cannot die. He that keepeth Israel slumbers not nor sleeps. The sun even in his absence holds up the earth all night, and at his coming also brings the day. So Christ keeps a soul intrusted to Him while it lies in darkness, and then draws on that darkness with the light of life. The love of a Saviour unseen reaches as far and holds as firmly as the law by which central suns grasp tributary worlds. His coming is like the morning; as sweet and as sure.

Fear not little flock; the good Shepherd knows His sheep all by name. He is absent, but He thinks of you. He feels your weight, and bears it. He longs to have you, and will not want you. He remained on the mountain-top only until His disciples fully felt their own need; and then He brought deliverance. Let none refuse the consolation on the one hand, or the reproof on the other, on the ground that the danger and the deliverance were both seen and temporal things. Our Redeemer became bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, that He might come close to us, and that

we might come closer to Him. The transactions of that night on the Sea of Galilee, and the mountain by its shore reveal the heart of Jesus more clearly than His coming to the world, or his intercession in heaven, because they are bodily, human, and palpable to sense. The longing of his human heart that night towards His absent brethren, and His goings, as God, upon the waters to find and save them, mark the line on which His love is running still. The compassion which He felt and the help which He rendered to these poor men are graven here as with a pen of iron and the point of a diamond, that I, in this latter day of time, may know His readiness to pity and ransom me. These lines show how the heart of our Redeemer lies. In that direction His love goes out, and it goes to the uttermost. To-day He is as able and as glad to save from a deeper, darker sea.—*Rev. Wm. Arnot.*

CONTINUANCE IS WANTING.

Even granting that you enjoy the world, and that it has performed all its promises, and left you nothing to wish but that these things should remain as they are, how do you know that they *will* remain as they are? "What is wanting here?" said a courtier to his sovereign, with whom he was riding amid the acclamations and splendour of a triumphal procession." "CONTINUANCE," replied the monarch. So say I. Tell me, if you will, of your youth, your health, the buoyancy of your spirits, your happy connexions, your gay parties, your elegant pleasures, your fair prospects, and then ask me what is wanting. I reply, CONTINUANCE. A single day may spoil everything: before to-morrow's sun shall rise, you may be attacked by disease and death. You know not what an hour may bring forth. Turn, then, for happiness from the world to religion,—this is both satisfying and certain. Nothing can rob you of its privileges; they are vast as the capacity of your soul, and lasting as your eternal existence. Hear the beautiful language of Christ,—"Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life;" John iv, 14.—*J. A. James.*

THE HOME OF THE BLESSED.

'Tis not where earthly sweets abound,
As Mahommed would give,
Nor the eternal hunting ground
Where Indians wish to live.

It is the land,—the land of friends!
No enemy is there,
There, friendship's formed that never ends,
Nor feeble grows with care.

A father's house, a father's home,
Where joys untold reside,
The saint's, the angel's, prophet's dome,
Where they shall e'er abide.

With garments white, and shining bright,
They walk Jerusalem's streets,
Those who have conquered in the fight,
And gained the blissful seats.

The swarthy negro shall be there,
The Indian from the wild,
The European bright and fair,
The yellow Papuan child.

From north, from south, from east, from west,
They've all been gathered in.
For ever in its realms to rest,
For ever free from sin.

All earth's distinctions pass away,
Above they are not known,
There the Redeemed their honours pay
The triune God alone.

For ever on the Lamb they gaze,
The Lamb that once was slain,
High praises to His honour raise,
In loftiest, holiest strain.

The story of redeeming love
The ransomed love to tell;
And in their blest abodes above
Shall ever on it dwell.

Earth's dark and dreary midnight gloom
For ever is dispelled,
The fears and terrors of the tomb
For ever, ever quelled.

The furnace fires of grief no more
To spoil their joy can reach;
The great refiner's work is o'er,
His image shines in each.

There shall the weary, tempest-toss'd,
Repose, secure from harm,
Life's stormy ocean they have crossed,
And nothing can alarm.

Time's troubled surge and changing sea
No longer round them lave,
All, all is calm as calm can be,
Without a rippling wave.

Than pristine Eden lovelier far,
Ere blight upon it fell,
Nought can its unknown grandeur mar,
Nor words that grandeur tell.

Its soft white light shall never set,
Nor streams of bliss run dry,
And on its hills of holiness,
The ransomed summer high.

Still there is room in that bright place,
Arise and let us go,
And every weight that clogs our race
Aside come let us throw.

The prize is not a laurel crown
Whose freshness lasts a day,
But glory's brightest diadem,
That never can decay.

X. Y. Z.

SINGULARITY.

It is strange! men are content to be singular in any thing save in the service of God and the salvation of their souls. They desire, and labour too, to be singularly rich and the wealthiest in a town, to be singularly proud and in fashion by themselves, to be the strongest in the company to pour in strong drink. They would with all their hearts be in honour alone, and adored above others. They would dwell alone, and not suffer a poor man's house to be within sight. They affect singularity in wit, learning, wisdom, valour, worldly reputation, and in all other earthly precedencies; but they can by no means endure singularity in zeal and the Lord's service. In matters of religion, they are resolved to do as the most do, though in so doing they utterly damn their own souls. "Broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat."—(Matt. vii. 13.) Basest cowardice and fearfulness, fit for such a doom! But "the fearful, and unbelieving . . . shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death."—(Rev. xxi. 8.) They are afraid of taking God's part too much, of fighting too valiantly under the colours of Christ, of being too busy about the salvation of their souls, lest they should be accounted too precise, fellows of an odd humour, and engrossers of more grace than ordinary. It is one of Satan's dreadful depths, as wide as hell, as brimful with the blood of infinite souls, to make men ambitious and covetous of singularity in all other things, but in godliness and God's service;—not to suffer it in themselves, and to persecute it in others.—*Bolton.*

LIVE TO GOD.

Unto him, as Christians, we are called upon to live; He who is the principle of our spiritual life is also made the object of it; as the vapours of the ocean supply the rivers that return into the ocean itself.

Unto Him, as Christians, we are called upon to die; He who died for us, is made the object of our death likewise; that as "our life is hid with Christ in God," so "when He who is our life shall appear, then we also may appear with Him in glory." . . . No reserve, you hear, is admitted in the statement of our profession; we live and die to Christ; our whole nature, in all its aspects and positions, is offered to Him, as one solemn and perpetual sacrifice; "bought with a price," we are delivered to Him as His own spiritual property in this world; "we are Christ's, and Christ is God's,"—so that, as it were, through Him, as man, we pass into the very presence of the Supreme Divinity, enter within the verge of that ineffable Nature with which He connects us, and catch upon our weak and shivering humanity the beams of the everlasting light of God!

It would be superfluous to enter into explanation of the meaning of phrases too manifest for elucidation. "To live unto God" cannot but be understood by all who remember that at every hour of life they are in truth "living unto" some object or other, whether it be worthy or unworthy the affections of a human heart. To some object their nature is consecrated, to some object the living sacrifice of the soul is perpetually presented. It is the very condition of our being, the most simple and the most universal of all; and hence it is that the Apostle employs as the common character of the renovated heart the quality of the object it embraces. In this very assembly the same sovereign test is applicable,—is even now applied by the all-perceiving Spirit of God. He can tell,—what I dare not pronounce,—whether even in this hour of prayer and penitence you have truly "lived unto God;" and how far the heaven of your secret hopes and supplications is that heaven which He has promised to His believing children,—that heaven of which it is the highest and holiest character that "the life unto Him" is there immortal!

What, then, is it to "live unto God?"

What is it but to return Him His own rights in the human heart; to concentrate on Him those affections which originally were formed for Him alone? What is it but to know and feel that even while this shadowy world encompasses us, there is around and above it a scene real, substantial, and eternal; a scene adequate,—and at this moment adequate,—to answer all the ardent longings of our bereaved souls,—a scene in which every holier affection, widowed and blighted here, is to be met and satisfied! . . . To live in this belief,—this hope; to read in the death of Christ death itself lost in immortality; to make the God of the New Testament the Friend, the Companion, the Consoler, of all earthly sorrow; to feel the brightest colours of ordinary life fade in "the glory that shall be revealed"—this is to live the "life," that heralds the immortality, "unto God!"

The immortality *unto God!* For this is the heaven of the Christian. "Whether we live," says the Apostle—and heaven is the *eternal* life,—"*we live unto God!*" Brethren! beloved brethren! have we learned to desire an eternity such as this? I have endeavoured to speak to you plainly; I will make an effort to be yet more distinct. . . . Let us suppose that by some supernatural agent an offer were suddenly made to each of us, of at once being admitted into the immediate presence of God in Heaven! Remembering what the laws are by which that abode of blessedness is governed,—remembering the strict and undeviating purity which it is represented as exacting from all who are its residents,—remembering that a God who cannot endure iniquity is there more immediately present to His creatures, both in the person of the Lord Jesus and in the clearer revelation opened to the minds of the Blest with regard to God's character and dealings,—remembering that this kingdom of everlasting righteousness is only known to us by the plain intimation that its whole tone of existence is opposed to all that is scripturally called "the World,"—and that a breath of unholiness cannot be suffered to taint its atmosphere of perfect peace,—holding all this in mind as the true portrait of the Heaven of the New Testament,—I ask you, whether, with hearts whose every pulsation beats for worldly interests, with affections that not (as per-

haps only too favourable a calculation) for one half-hour in the twenty-four are really lifted from the dust of the path on which we are together creeping to the grave,—with hopes that never were taught to stray beyond the clouds of this world's foul atmosphere,—with all your busy dreams about you (for we walk in visions) in none of which do Heaven or its God find a moment's place—Christians! I ask you, would you unhesitatingly rejoice in the offer? I do not ask you whether you would assent with your lips to the proposal; for, associating as we do Heaven with Happiness, perhaps no one would deliberately and verbally refuse it;—but I ask you, whether, with that spring and rapture of the heart which a great worldly prosperity brings, you would (bearing in mind the true nature of the change) grasp at the proposal, and call aloud for death to open the gate of the Kingdom of God? Would your *inmost Soul* accept the change? Would you agree to cast aside all the hopes and enjoyments of your state in this life, to be the calm and peaceful Adorer of the world to come? Even to the afflicted I might ask—would they accept *peace* on such conditions as the peace of God imposes? Alas! few can sincerely answer that they would. The heaven of the gospel is no heaven to those who have not learned the holiness of the gospel. Is not the test, then, simple and decisive? Can we deem that we are “living unto God” in *this* world, if we shrink with dread from the notion of living unto Him in another, and living unto Him *for ever*?

What indeed is the Heaven of every man but the conceived realization of his own cherished wishes. As this ideal happiness varies, “Heaven” (which is but the expression of its ultimate completion) correspondingly varies. Accordingly, if you listen to the confidences of any man, you will infallibly detect in what quarter his Heaven is situated. It is a pole to which the magnet of his mind perpetually trembles. Thus it is that the world is filled with a thousand forgeries of heaven, the illusion of that Deceiver who spreads out these phantoms of happiness to hide the yawning portals of ruin behind them! And hard indeed is the work of the servant of Christ, among all these gaudy visions of flushed and passionate pleasures, to secure even a glance at the cold outlines of the

heaven he proposes. In the midst of a crowd of impassioned visionaries, he feels how unwelcome is his intrusion. When every mind is encompassed with its own favourite scenery, how can he with his fond anticipations of spiritual enjoyments expect even the refuse of men's thoughts? Will the walls of a church transform the souls and bodies of the listeners,—that those who are worldly and sensual up to its doors, shall enter them disengaged, and prepared to hear of eternal purity? We may crowd the temples of the Most High, but is it not too often as those whom the Prophet saw in the midst of the holy places; the visions of our idolatry accompany us even into the house of the living God; and though we kneel as in adoration, our busy hearts neglect to adore, and we are still,—“every man *in the chambers of his imagery!*” . . . God grant to us a strong desire to live the “life unto God,”—by patience and faith “to walk as seeing the Invisible,”—to yearn after that devotion of heart and soul unto Him, which, begun in this world, shall be perfected and consummated in the world of eternal peace!—*Rev. W. A. Butler, M.A.*

♦♦♦♦♦ DYING WORDS OF NAPOLEON

A late visitor at his tomb in St. Helena writes:—

I turned away from house and tomb with deeper convictions than ever of “the vanity of man as mortal.” Who would not? And that death-room! How the last words linger about it which Napoleon uttered in it, from a crushed and bleeding heart! “General Bertrand, I shall soon be in my grave. Such is the fate of great men. So it was with Cæsar and Alexander. And I too am forgotten, and the Marengo conqueror and emperor is a college theme. My exploits are tasks given to pupils by their tutor, who sits in judgment upon me, according to me censure or praise. And remark what is soon to become of me. I die before my time, and my dead body, too, must return to the earth and become food for worms. Behold the destiny, now at hand, of him who has been called the great Napoleon! What an abyss between my great misery and the eternal reign of Christ, who is proclaimed, loved and adored, and whose kingdom is extending over all the earth.”

THE SERVANT AND THE BANK-NOTE.

A young woman who was in service at a large inn in Yorkshire, observed a traveller drop from his pocket-book a bank-note. She picked it up, and consulted with her fellow-servants whether she would return it or not. They laughed at her scruples, and told her to keep it, which alas! she did.—In course of time she was well settled in the world, having married a respectable tradesman, and the occurrence of the theft appeared to be forgotten. But after she had been married a few years, she fell into a deep decline. In this state she was awakened to a sense of her sins; she became through grace a sincere penitent, and was deeply impressed with the value of true religion. She sometimes felt its comforts, and found that peace of mind which passeth all understanding. These happy seasons, however, were only like the early dew, and it was not until after her death that the clergyman who visited her, learned the cause of that gloom and sadness which so often sat upon her dying countenance, and disquieted her spirit. To a friend she had related the cause in an agony of grief, and the having taken the bank-note which was dropped on the floor. She would willingly have given fifty times its value to have discovered the traveller, that it might be restored, but in vain, he was wholly unknown to her, therefore restitution to himself was impossible. This thought preyed upon her mind severely at times, and embittered her last hours. Should this account fall into the hands of any one who has sinned in this respect, let them learn the value of an honest principle.—Oh! tremble, lest you be tempted for a little paltry gain to turn conscience into an enemy, to vex and harass you living and dying. You may see money or various other articles laid about, which, if you are inclined to pilfer, may become a snare to you, but remember God's eye is upon you. The darkness and the light are both the same to him. "Be sure your sin will find you out," in one way or other, and let all learn that both desire and effort to make restitution where any have been wronged is a necessary part of true repentance.—Her principle was right she wished to restore the stolen property, she abhorred the

sin, she hated the ill-gotten gain; and thus it will always be with every true penitent. Reader, be warned. Plant not your dying pillow with thorns. If you have been overcome by this sin—if the person wronged cannot be found, hasten and delay not to give its value to the cause of God in some way, and most assuredly His blessing will follow such a course.

The Child's Prayer Answered.

A poor woman and her three children, residing on the New Cavendish Street, London City Mission district, were on one occasion brought to starvation. They had neither money nor food, and knew not what to do to obtain any. The children had been crying for a breakfast, but the mother had none to give them. She told them she would go out and try to get some dinner for them. The mother accordingly left the children at home alone, whilst she went out to seek food, but did not know which way to bend her steps, or where to look for the needed supply. The little ones began to talk about the prospect of something to eat, when one of them, a child perhaps of five or six years of age, left the rest, went into the bedroom, knelt down, and then offered a prayer to this effect: "O God, send us some dinner to-day: I know you will—you are very good—for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen." With a cheerful face, the little one rose from his knees, ran to the other children, and told them that they would get some dinner to-day. They wanted to find out how it was he knew that; when he told them that it was because he had prayed to God for it. *And that dear child's believing prayer was heard.* Some old friend of his mother's, whom she had not seen for many years, met her in the street, gave her a shilling, and with it she purchased the dinner the child had so beautifully prayed for. The joy of the children and of the mother, too, may be imagined, when she returned home with her apron filled with food.—*American Tract.*

LIFE.—Every day is a little life; and our whole life is but a day repeated.—*Band of Hope Review.*

KIND WORDS.—As a cross word begets a word that's cross, so will a kind one beget its own likeness.—*Ibid.*

THE GOOD NEWS.

JULY 1st, 1862.

BRETHREN, WRITE.

It is surprising how few that can write for periodicals on the Lord's side do so. We have now had two or three years experience in connection with religious publications, and it is in accordance with that of others who have often expressed the same surprise, and who have been disappointed at not receiving that literary co-operation which in the circumstances was expected. It may be that this arises from various reasons.

Some cannot think of presenting anything to the public in a printed form unless they are their choicest thoughts, expressed in the most elegant manner. We had occasion not long since to meet a distinguished divine, and we availed ourselves of the opportunity of suggesting that he might favour our readers with a contribution from his pen. He replied that he had a great deal of writing for his pulpit preparations, but writing for the press required to be so carefully done that he feared he had scarcely the time. Now we are no advocates for careless writing, but we fear that many that might be serviceable in this day by writing as well as speaking, allow their usefulness to be confined on account of their credit. They appear to be more careful of their own glory than the glory of their master. And we think that there would be no difficulty in establishing that those books that have been least conspicuous for their condensed thought and polished sentences, have been most generally read and been most useful to souls. Baxter has left us for our profit a record of his experience. "When I first intended to write," says he, "I was under another temptation. Being of their mind that thought that nothing should be made public but what a man had

first laid out his choicest art upon, I thought to have acquainted the world with nothing but what was the work of time and diligence. But my conscience soon told me that there was too much of pride and selfishness in this, and that humility and self-denial required me to lay by the affectation of that style and spare that industry which tended but to advance my name with men, while it hindered the main work and crossed my end." And then he mentions how the Lord in his providence gave success to some popular, unpolished discourses," and thereby encouraged him to go on writing what might arrest souls, though it had few ornaments of fleshly wisdom. So it was with the celebrated Thomas Boston. When urged to publish some writings that had greatly edified those who heard the contents, he wrote: "I do not, nor can I, expect a name among the men of name. The Lord knows I would be content to lose name and credit amongst them, so that the sermons were useful to some poor souls." His friends wrote him, and one of them closed a letter with the words: "LET RESPECT TO DUTY, AND THE SALVATION OF PERISHING SOULS SWAY YOU." Boston read it, and exclaimed, "*Perishing souls! Then let me be a fool for perishing souls,*" and so the book went to the press.

Brethren, write. Let the salvation of perishing souls sway you. Do your best, but write. Seek God's glory in your effort, and God will never allow you for that to be brought into dishonour.

Some have not an adequate idea of the field of usefulness presented by some periodicals. What an extensive field of usefulness is presented to one who, by the grace of God, can write for such publications as our own. It is generally conceded that every religious periodical is read more or less by four persons on an average. At this rate articles in both our publications have about *Eighty thousand readers. Is not this a large*

sphere? Does it not present an important channel for conveying important truths? and is it not a pity that it is not taken more advantage of. We have frequently been led to suspect, from the conduct of brethren, whose congregations had a recognized membership of fifty or so, that in their opinion our sphere of usefulness was inferior to the one which they had the honour to occupy. If our suspicion is correct, we think that, all other things being equal, their conclusion is unsound, and we fear that this inadequate idea of the importance of writing for the press, lies at the root of the general indisposition to do so.

Some forget the personal advantages to be derived from writing to the press. It is a maxim with which all are familiar, that "reading makes a full man, conversation a ready man, and writing a correct man." Writing tends to make a man correct, not only in statement of facts, but also in definition of principles. We feel that we do not thoroughly understand a subject on which we have never written, and certainly we do not understand how ignorant we are of a matter till we attempt to place our ideas on it upon paper. What a man understands he can usually express, and every attempt to express accurately is a struggle of the mind towards understanding the subject more thoroughly. Therefore brethren should write.

Powerful as the press has already become for good as well as for ill, it is obvious that the press will still become a more potent means than it has yet reached. With the progress of man in the world will be the progress of this power, and it becomes every one to cultivate the power of controlling it for the glory of God, and the advancement of his cause.

We would be seated in the heavenly Canaan, but are loath to be scratched with the briars and thorns of the wilderness.

How Many Friends has Jesus?

When we look around us at the worldliness that prevails, notwithstanding the great amount of christian profession, we are disposed to conclude that there are but few friends to Jesus, but when we travel from place to place, when we lead the conversation, whether on railway, on stage, or in hotel, we find that there are a greater number of friends of Jesus than we had before imagined. In any community, whether village, town or city, friends of Jesus are to be found, occupying the highest and the humblest positions, and bearing their testimony to His name. They are frequently speaking to Jesus, and always ready to speak about Him, and if we who profess to be His friends would, in our journeys from place to place, be ready to talk concerning Him, we would discover very many fellow-passengers to the same city. Fellow-heirs of the same glorious inheritance.

How many workers has Jesus?

It is doubtless true in our day as in the days of our Saviour, that the harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few. They are few compared with the abundance that is ripe, yet they are many compared with the number that were assembled at first at Jerusalem. Think of the number of ministers of the gospel of every name and in every nation. Think of the labourers in their congregations as office-bearers, Sabbath-school Teachers, Collectors and Tract-distributors. Think of the various missions and the missionaries that are engaged in their respective localities. Think of the societies of different kinds for the dissemination of the truth and the propagating of the faith, and of the number of employees that are under their control, and though you can form an adequate conception of their number. Yet you will require to add an untold number of individuals, unnoticed and unknown, who by their wrestlings, and their quiet counsellings are working diligently and faithfully for the Lord.

How many instrumentalities has Jesus?

The preaching of the gospel is the great and grand instrumentality for the advancement of the truth. Yet the Lord, who is infinite in wisdom, can and does devise and employ many instrumentalities for the spread of his cause. The circulation of His Word in whole or in part, the scattering of tracts, the publication of religious books and publications, though the most commonly associated with the preaching of the gospel for the advancement of the kingdom of God, are by no means all the instrumentalities. There are missionary ships, and merchant ships at the service of the missionary cause. There are soldiers on the fields of battle proclaiming the gospel of peace, and wielding with effect the sword of the Spirit. There are merchants at the back of their counter counselling their customers to buy of Christ "gold tried in the fire that they may be rich." There are artists who, in earlier years, fired by ambition, and animated with the hope of occupying a niche on the temple of fame, now prosecuting their art with untiring devotion in behalf of the kingdom of Jesus. In short, men in every walk in life are to be found consecrating their talents to the service of Jesus.

Reader, are you a friend of Jesus? Are you a worker for Jesus? Time is short. "Work while it is called to-day. The night cometh when no man can work."

TIME AND ETERNITY.

The following is the translation of a French tract bearing this title.—*Translator.*

"The only way to make time truly happy, is to propose for a glorious eternity. But, how can one properly prepare himself for it? Too many persons persuade themselves that there is nothing easier than to get to heaven. They do not know that, as

sinners, they are guilty before God; they do not know the purity and perfection of His law, and they rest on an erroneous view of their own righteousness. If they observe what is outward in religion, if they repeat a certain number of prayers, and sometimes receive the communion, they think that their happiness is secured for eternity. But, when we consult Holy Writ, we see that something more than all that is needed to prepare us for eternal happiness. We there learn that those only, who are reconciled, justified, and adopted, because they believe in the atonement and righteousness of Christ, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Ignorance and thoughtlessness, alone, can lead a man to believe that he shall obtain pardon and eternal life by his works. Who, by his obedience, can satisfy the demands which divine justice makes of us? Who, by the tears of repentance, or acts of charity, can blot out the long list of his sins? Scripture tells us that *by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His (God's) sight*, Rom. iii. 20. But, there is revealed to us in the Gospel, a way whereby the chief of sinners can obtain a free pardon, being *renewed in the spirit of his mind*, Eph. iv. 23, and enjoying a *peace which passeth all understanding*, Phil. iv. 7. Do you desire to know this way? There it is. Believe on Jesus Christ with all your heart; rest entirely on the promise of salvation through His merits, His intercession, and His grace. Jesus Christ is made wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, 1 Cor. i. 30, to all those who believe on Him. But, beware of being satisfied with a mere opinion, or with a vague knowledge which exists only in the head. Many speak with confidence of Jesus Christ and his merits, who, however, obey not His commandments, and follow not His example. Jesus Christ himself said to persons of this description. "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

John vi. 46, and Paul declares in the clearest manner, that *if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His*, Rom. viii. 9. You shall not be truly prepared to die, until you have been reconciled to God by the Redeemer and have felt within you the operation, and the witness of the Holy Spirit. The faith which justifies is a principle which always provides holiness. It touches and changes the heart, and sheds its influence over the whole life and character of him who possesses it. The Bible speaks of a house not made with hands, 2 Cor. v. 1, where Jesus has prepared dwellings for his disciples; and it also says, that it is necessary that our earthly house of this tabernacle be destroyed, that what is mortal, may be swallowed up of life, v. 4. "Now" Paul says, "*He that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the spirit,*" v. 5. All those who have experienced this change, and received this earnest, shall certainly possess the inheritance of eternal glory.

But, how is it that so many persons live here below, as if they were to remain forever? Do they believe that, probably, they shall be freed from dying? Do they believe that they shall die like beasts, and that when they breathe their last, they shall lose all consciousness? No, they would be offended if you should rank them among unbelievers or atheists, and yet their thoughts and affections are all occupied with the possessions and the pleasures of this world. Is it not surprising that men can act in a manner so directly opposite to their convictions? If a future and eternal life were only probable, it should deeply engage all the faculties of our souls; but, it is more than probable, it is certain. You, who are now reading these lines, are you one of those who acknowledge this great truth, and yet, perhaps, think but seldom of it, and when this thought enters your mind, does it not make

an impression? does it not excite emotion in your heart? why do you then act against your convictions? Is there no solution of this riddle of absurdity and folly? Yes, there is, and here it is—you freely join yourself up to indifference and stupidity—you try to forget what you dare not deny, what you feel yourself forced to believe; you listen to the blind impulses of your inclinations and passions, rather than to the voice of reason and conscience. How long will you allow yourself to be led astray by the illusions and vanities which agitate and deceive your soul? When you shall at last awake from this sleep of death, will you not deeply regret your present conduct? It has so happened to many others, it will so happen to you. What a striking contrast between what one thinks before, and after, his emotions! "It is impossible for me," said a man, whose heart grace had touched at an advanced age, "it is impossible for me to describe the change which has been wrought in my soul. It seems to me, that a new world opens itself to me. All the interests, and all the goods of this, return to nothing, when I compare them with those new heavens and that new earth, which I by faith see beforehand. They seem to me so vain, so frivolous, insignificant, that my blindness during these long years, in which I have lived absorbed by these objects appears to myself altogether inconceivable." But, what will it be if you sleep till the moment when death seizes you; if you are aroused by the "The king of terrors;" if you are aroused only in eternity; if you do not perceive your sins and your folly, till there is no remedy, no more hope? Dreadful thought! Lost! wholly, eternally lost! It shall then be too late for repentance, and the cheering voice of mercy shall reach you no more.

We have reason to think that many believe that a serious attention to religion would destroy all happiness. One cannot

conceive an idea more absurd in itself, or more opposed to the truth. True religion is the most abundant source of happiness; it is absolutely necessary to enlighten, elevate, purify, and sustain the spirit of man. We have in Jesus Christ a rock, a refuge, a resource, which never fails. It is to Him we owe our brightest hopes, and our most precious consolations. Is it not a well ascertained fact that the true disciples of Jesus Christ regard the approach of death with a calmness, a serenity, a firmness, to which unbelievers and worldly persons are strangers? Faith in the Holy Scripture leads us to Jesus Christ; His righteousness and His grace are sufficient for us. The glory of eternity appears to our eyes with a brightness always greater in proportion as the truth enlightens our minds the more, and the love of God possesses our hearts the more. "The precious promises of the Gospel," says a Christian author, "are my support and consolation; they alone can impart true peace in the hour of death. I am not afraid to die. The gospel of Jesus Christ has raised me above the fear of death, for I know that my Redeemer liveth." Another christian who suffered great agony in his last moments, and who endured it with exemplary courage and patience, often said—"Lord, *what thou wilt, when thou wilt it, and as thou wilt it.*"

Are you disposed to say—"let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his?" This desire of itself, though you should often and earnestly express it, will not procure for you the great privilege. You cannot receive the crown without bearing the cross, nor be a partaker of the peace which true christians enjoy in the hour of death, without having been a partaker of the faith and holiness of which they were models during their lives. Oh! that you may be stirred up to seek the inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for

those who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, 1 Peter i. 4. 5."

Metis, C. E.

T. F.

WHICH GOSPEL IS BEST?

Mrs. Burr, the beautiful Esther Edwards thus writes to her father, just after the death of her husband, President Burr, and from the bedside of the sick, perhaps dying son: "Oh, how good is God. He not only kept me from complaining, but comforted me. I saw the fulness there was in Christ for little infants, and his willingness to accept such as were offered to him in faith. 'Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, were most comforting words. God also showed me, in such a lively manner, the fulness there was in himself of all spiritual blessings that I said, 'Although all streams are cut off, yet so long as my God lives I have enough.' In this time of trial I was led to enter into a renewed covenant with God, in a more solemn manner than ever before, and with the greatest freedom and delight did I give myself and my children to him. This act of my soul left me in a great calm, and steady trust in God. A few days after, one evening, in talking of the glorious state of my dear departed husband, my soul was carried out in such large desires after that glorious state, that I was forced to retire from the family to hide my joy."

The little sick boy recovered, and became the famous Aaron Burr, who rejected the precious faith of his mother, and preferred the gospel of infidelity to the gospel of Christ. In that gospel he reared his only daughter. That daughter made a dishonourable marriage, and the sudden death of her only and tenderly loved son thus discloses the emptiness of her father's philosophy, and the wretchedness of a soul bereft of Christian hope. There is no more grief for me. The world is a blank, I have lost my boy. My child is gone for ever. In every way I turn the same anguish meets me. You talk of consolation. I know not what you have lost. The Omnipotence can give no equivalent for my boy; no, none, none."

"TIME ENOUGH YET!"

"*Time enough yet!*" Say you so, happy child, with the bright eye and flaxen locks? You are playing amid sunny flowers, and dancing over the soft sod. To you, life is so pleasant, that you wish not to think on serious things. Ah, little one, have you heard of Jesus! He would place His kind hand on that head of yours, and speak musical words of blessing. He would never quell the exuberance of your spirit, nor make your heart less happy, or your step less buoyant. Oh no; but He would bless the morning of your life with the dew-drops of His love, and whether the even-tide hasten or linger,—Once His child all would be well!

"*Time enough yet!*" Say you so, young man, with the lofty brow and earnest spirit? Upward, ever upward your fearless eyes look, and your eager feet tend. Steep the hill-side may be, but your imagination pictures bright glories at the top,—a marble pillar with your name inscribed thereon, a laurel wreath for your brow. Have you, then, no longing for the crown of righteousness? Are you so strong that you need no help? Is not the way slippery? Are there no dangers? And *if* the summit be gained, is that all the spirit within you wants? Oh, there are glories that fade not away—crowns of immortal honour—a kingly friend, are not these worth striving after?

"*Time enough yet!*" Say you so, maiden, with the downy cheek and love-deloquent eye? Warm hands press you, strong arms enfold you, quivering lips bless you. Yet are you satisfied? Knows not your heart a deeper need, an ever-increasing thirst? In the silence of your own room, when the glitter and fascination of the day are over, cries not your spirit wildly—ever for something more? "*Jesus of Nazareth passeth by!*" Oh, cling to Him!—His love will satisfy even your yearning. He is no idol which, when your whole soul adores Him, will fall from His pedestal, as you know some have done. He will never disappoint you. He is "altogether lovely."

Why not love Him now?
 "*Time enough yet!*" Say you so, strong man, with the mighty intellect and noble form? Shines the sun of prosperity so brightly on your path that you fear no

cloud? Know you not how "*riches take to themselves wings and fly away!*" Have you not seen that honour is a puff of empty air, and prosperity a shadow, and life itself—"the wind passeth over it and it is gone?" In the wreck, which may come in a moment, you will need a rock of safety—will there be time enough to seek it then?

"*Time enough yet!*" Say you so, mother, with trembling spirit, and deep, deep heart? There is sweet music in your home, which love has made so passing beautiful. And the joy-drops fill your eyes, as they rest upon little lovely children—treasures you would never part with, though the earth's storehouse of jewels were offered in exchange. The little pouting lips, how they press your own—the tiny hands, how they cling to you, ah, to your very heart, and the opening, awakening spirit, how it begins to shine through all! What will you do with it? Is *your* hand firm enough to uphold it amid life's dangers? Are you wise to train it into the right path? Need you no helper? No infinite wisdom, no almighty strength, no deathless love?—Will it be time enough to seek these when your darlings have passed away from your keeping, on to the great ocean of the unseen? And He who has thus filled to the brim your cup of blessing, have you no wish to offer Him anything in return?

"*Time enough yet!*" Say you so, aged man, with tottering feet and failing strength? See you not the long shadows the coming night has cast over your path? Look! the darkness hastens! You have had "time enough" all your life—you have little enough now,—beware lest you have *too little*.

"*Time enough!*" What if there were? Would any of you give the deep cupful of your life-riches to the world, and dare offer the *dregs* to the Highest? Would you lay at Satan's feet the fresh young budding flower, and reserve the withered stalk for your maker? *Would you, if you might,* spend the long bright day in self-gratification, and bring the night with its weakness and weariness to Him who has blessed every moment? Oh, surely none of *you* would be so sinful, so mean, so unwise!

"*Time enough yet!*" *There is not!*—Silently death is drawing near! His scythe

is mowing, mowing, mowing,—its blade is very near you now—you may be the next. Oh, turn from him and look to Jesus!—Think how He loves you, what He has done for you all your life long, before your life, and what He is doing now. Then can you say, “Time enough yet?”

There is no time to spare!
Oh, while the Saviour standeth there,
Throbs not thy heart with love to Him?
Become His own ere life grow dim!

By all He suffer'd here,
His sojourn in the desert drear—
Thine all unto His altar bring,
Thyself before His footstool fling.

Now, while this moment stays,
While sunbeams flash athwart thy days,
Thou needst a friend—He now will be,
A loving, changeless Friend to thee.

MARIANNE FARNINGHAM.

THE THOUGHT FOR HARD TIMES.

How many hearts to-day beat anxiously, as they think of the future. “What shall we eat and wherewithal shall we be clothed?” are the thoughts, that disturb the peace of thousands. Let this thought cheer you:—

“Your heavenly Father knoweth ye have need of all these things.” The Psalmist could say in old age—“I have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.” Most wonderfully has God come to the help of his children in times of distress, ever since the world began. Thousands of recorded instances teach us of his watchful care, and there are tens of thousands more the world never hears of.

The early Greenland missionaries seemed constantly supplied from the Lord's table. They were once in great straits for food, having left but a few tallow candles. In this extremity, God put it into the heart of a stranger native to travel 120 miles to sell them some seals and oatmeal, a delicacy, indeed, compared with their former fare. At another time, a party was returning from an unsuccessful search for food, when contrary winds drove their boat on a desert island. Here they shot a large bird, which afforded them food and quills for writing. After another similar excursion, as they came home disheartened, a native brought them word that a Dutch ship had letters for them. On sending to the vessel, they found a large cask of provisions from a kind friend in Amsterdam, with a promise

to send more if needed. We who have never been in such extremity, cannot realize their joy and gratitude.

They had established a new station at Lichtenfels, but were likely to perish for want of shelter, as no materials could be obtained.—But now God chartered even the waves to do his bidding. Some large timbers, suitable for beams, drifted to the spot, and the house was built. For 29 years were the founders of the mission thus preserved, in all their perils and sufferings. Hundreds of poor heathens were led by them to embrace Christ, and many had died rejoicing in his love.

Do not despond, Christian, though the future for yourself and little ones looks dark. He who rules the world is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. He can bring relief from sources whence you least expect it.—Commit it to him, doing well whatever duty comes to your hand. “He shall deliver thee in six troubles; yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.”

FOOLISH THOUGHTS.

We are apt to believe in providence as long as we have our own way; but if things go awry, then we think, if there is a God, He is in heaven, and not on earth. The cricket in the spring builds his little house in the meadow, and chirps for joy, because all is going so well with him.—But when he hears the sound of the plough and the furrows off, and the thunder of the omen tread, then the skies begin to look dark, and his heart fails him. The plough comes crunching along, and turns his dwelling bottom-side up, and as he is rolling over and over, without a home his heart says, “O, the foundations of the world are destroyed, and every thing is going to ruin.” But the husbandman, who walks behind his plough, singing and whistling, goes, does he think the foundations of the world are breaking up? Why, he does not so much as know there was any house or cricket there. He thinks of the harvest that is to follow the track of the plough; and the cricket, too, if he will—but he will find a thousand blades of grass where there were but one before. We are like the crickets. If anything happens to overthrow our plans, we think all is going to ruin.—Becher.

Labour for "Particular Persons."

On his death-bed, David Brainerd said one day, "It is a great comfort for me to think that I have done a little for God in the world. O! it is but a very small matter, yet I have done a little, and I lament that I have not done more for Him. There is nothing in the world worth living for, but doing good, and finishing God's work; doing the work that Christ did. . . . My greatest joy and comfort has been to do something for promoting the interests of religion and the souls of PARTICULAR PERSONS."

There is a principle contained in this last sentence, which is worthy of the serious consideration of all who desire to "save souls from death." It is especially worthy of the notice of pastors. I am fully aware of the difficulties of ministers in doing what is strictly pastoral work. The demands on their time and energies are very great in the single department of preaching the Gospel. Besides, it is quite difficult to get at people in the family in such a way as to profit them by personal appeals on the subject of religion. From observing the minister of my own circle, I am led to suppose that many do not visit *pastorally* to any great extent, and that it is becoming a very decided and general impression that the minister is to accomplish his work by being in the pulpit, "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." I do not dispute the vital necessity and power of these public ministrations; but I would suggest that there is danger of our forgetting the interest of "PARTICULAR souls" in the glare and attractions of public services.

Let me illustrate my thought by facts. A lady had a Sabbath class, to teach for which she made diligent preparations. Her instructions in the class were necessarily of a somewhat general nature; but she desired that each of her scholars should be converted to God. Therefore it was her habit to pray specifically for each scholar, and then to visit each one in her home for the purpose of special religious conversation. She laboured to save, not her class, but the "particular souls" in her class. It is worth repeating that this humble, faithful teacher, had reason to believe that each of her scholars had become a true Christian.

The late Dr. Spetzer, in his "Pastor's

Sketches," has given an intensely interesting narrative of one morning's labours in looking after "particular souls." It was a less obtrusive labour than to hold a large audience, a congregation, in earnest attention to the preached word, but he was surprised to find five young persons, with each of whom he conversed alone, anxious and inquiring the way of salvation. The turning-point in each case seemed to be the special effort to save, not a congregation, but a particular soul. Each one thus laboured with was led to Christ; and it is not improbable that, had that personal labour been withheld, the consequences might have been fatal.

In greater or less degree, every successful pastor has had some similar experience. Thus, on a certain day, a pastor went into a house where were two ladies, to speak to them on the subject of religion. His first allusion to the subject showed that the younger one, who was not a professor, was already in a state of great anxiety about herself, and needed that some one should take her by the hand to lead her to Christ. As her pastor unfolded the steps she was to take, the Holy Spirit owned his words, and soon she was, indeed, led. In another case, he found an aged woman of eighty years, and another in the prime of life. Both had very similar difficulties which required that kind of labour of which Brainerd spoke, in referring to his doing something for "particular souls." The public preaching seemed to be too general to meet their want, but this personal labour had a blessed result; and one of them, in relating her experience to the elder of the church, said that it had moved her deeply when her pastor came to seek her as a lost sheep.

Another case is in point, where a pastor was in a village store one day, and seeing the clerk alone—he was a moral man, and a punctual attendant on public worship—he asked him if he felt any anxiety about his soul's salvation? "I cannot say that I do," was the reply. "You believe that, as a sinner, you cannot be saved in any way but through faith in Christ?" "Yes, I believe it, but I do not feel it." "Then you acknowledge that you are exposed to die and be lost at any moment?" "Yes, I know that it is so." "Now then, Mr. —, you know your duty to repent of sin,

and believe in Christ; will you begin this moment to *do your duty as far as you know how?*" "I will," he replied. The pastor left him, and in a few days that young man hoped in Christ as a new creature. In all these cases, the pivot on which such a blessed result seemed to turn was the labour to save *particular* souls. That pastor, in looking over the several scores who were brought to repentance under his labours, could scarcely recall one who did not apparently owe to specific, personal labour in private, as much as to the public but general labours of the pulpit.

I remember the case of a young man, who apparently sat unmoved under the public preaching of the word, whose heart was pierced by the direct address of a pious uncle, who met him at the church door one Sabbath evening. The good man touched his nephew on the shoulder, and said, "O, E——," (calling his Christian name), but was unable to utter another word by reason of his emotions. The young man had no sleep that night. The arrow had pierced between the joints of the harness. Such cases might be multiplied to make a volume, showing how often a saving impression is made by addressing the impenitent sinner as an individual. Within two months I heard a pastor remark that there had been several conversions in his congregation the last winter, and that every one of these converts traced the work back to impressions made in private conversation.

Let me not be misunderstood as undervaluing the word preached in the pulpit, but only as pleading for this effort to promote the interests of "particular souls" by private personal appeal. Let the pastor make a list of his impenitent hearers, and look at each name by itself; and he will feel inclined to seek each one alone for personal conversation. The minister who pursues such a plan will find himself remunerated both by the personalunction it will bring to his own soul, and by seeing at least some souls led to Christ. I am sure this is so.

Better it were that God should be angry with us, than that we be angry with God, for He can soon be at an union with us again, because He is merciful; but when we are angry with Him, then the case is not to be helped.—*Luther.*

"HOW LONG, YE SIMPLE?"

"THE SIMPLE PASS ON, AND ARE PUNISHED. Although the saved are not their own saviours, the lost are their own destroyers.

A man is passing on his way which he has chosen. He is eating and drinking, and making merry. Guilt is on his conscience, but he feels not its fiery bite; wrath is treasured over him but he fears not its final outpouring. The open door of mercy abuts upon his downward path, but he heeds it not: he passes on—he passes by it. As he passes, a voice falls upon his ear; it is the voice of God's own Son con-juring him with strong crying and tears to turn and live. Startled for a moment by the sound, he pauses and looks; but seeing nothing that takes his fancy, he passes on again. Again a voice behind cries, in tones which show that life and death eternal are turning on their hinge, "Repent, lest you perish! why will you die?" He stops and looks behind. It is a fit of seriousness, but it soon goes off. He heard a sound; but it must have been an echo in the mountains, or a call to some wanderer who has lost his way. Stopping his ears, and shutting his eyes, he passes on. Deaf to warnings from above, and blind to beacons reared before him, he still passes on, until, at a moment when he counts his footing firmest, he stumbles over the brink of life, and falls into the hands of the living God!

This fall, the Bible tell us, "is a fearful thing." Fear it now, and flee, ye who are passing on through life in your sin, and without a Saviour. Surely it should be plain to any rational being, that though a man may live without God in the world, he cannot escape from God when he dies. Do those who are passing on with their backs to Christ, and their hearts full of vain shows, know where life's boundary-line lies, or what awaits themselves beyond it? Why will men pass on, if they are on such a path that another step may be possible?

If the simple is punished at last, it is because, in spite of a beseeching, weeping Saviour, he "passed on" through the day of grace, and fell upon the day of judgment.—*Rev. Wm. Arnot.*

Sabbath School Lessons.

July 13th, 1862.

WATCH! WATCH! WATCH!

LUKE XII. 35-48.

The disciples were addressed in this lesson relative to diligent attention to their proper work. It was the custom of servants in the days of our Lord, to gird up their long loose garments by a girdle round their loins, that they might attend to their work with less embarrassment. Our Lord employed this figure to remind his disciples to be prepared for active service, and to be vigilant in the discharge of their duties. And as servants during the night, when they were engaged in work, or were watching for their master's return home, kept their "lights burning," so the disciples were directed to make an open profession of his truth, and to hold out the light of a good conversation.

Weddings at that time were generally celebrated at night, and the return of the guests might be uncertain. The servants therefore, when waiting for their master, were obliged to watch that they might open to him without delay. By this *simile* our Lord probably alluded to his own ascension to heaven, his summoning his people by death, and his return to judge the world.

THE REWARD OF WATCHING.

To those found watching, the Lord will gird himself, and make them sit down to eat, and will come forth and serve them, ver. 37. He will advance their honour and happiness in proportion as they advance His glory and do His will. Jesus Christ was among His disciples as one that served, and did once, to show His condescension, gird himself and serve them, when He washed their feet; John xiii. 4, 5. That action signified the joy with which they shall be received into the other world by the Lord Jesus, who is gone before to prepare for them, and has told them that His Father will honour them. John xii. 26. To those servants whom He finds approving themselves faithful and wise, He shall reward them by higher promotion. *He will make them rulers over all that He hath*, ver. 44.

Those who committed gross enormities would be punished, vers. 45, 46; and those who neglected to perform their duty according to their knowledge, would also be punished. Those who were ignorant of their duty would be punished with few stripes. Those who knew their duty and did it not, would be punished with many stripes; vers. 47, 48.

Learn—(1.) That the Lord will come. We are left in doubt about the time, but we are not left in doubt as to the reality of His appearance. He may and does come to some of

His servants in the first watch. To others the night is far spent ere He makes His appearance. But this uncertainty tests our fidelity.

(2.) When the Lord comes He will reward His faithful servants, and punish His unfaithful ones; vers. 42-48. Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap; Gal. vi. 7.

(3.) That the Lord's coming will be sudden, unexpected; ver. 40. His coming shall be as a snare; Luke xxi. 35. He shall come as a thief in the night; 1 Thess. v. 2. As lightning; Luke xvii. 24. In such an hour as ye think not; Matt. xxiv. 44. We ought all to be prepared for His coming.

(4.) According to a man's ability is his responsibility; vers. 47, 48.

July 20th, 1862.

THE BURNING BUSH.—EXOD. III. 1-22.

THE BUSH ON FIRE.

At the period referred to in this lesson Moses was about eighty years of age. He had spent forty years in Midian, keeping the flock of Jethro his father-in-law. "Moses," says Bishop Patrick, "was taken from the sheepfold (as David in after times), to be ruler of God's people: for as hunting of wild beasts is proper to men of a martial genius, and fits men to be captains and generals of armies, so the feeding of sheep is the best exercise and preparation for a kingdom, and the gentle government of mankind." The occupation of a shepherd was by no means a mean one in the East, as Jacob, David, Job and others, as well as Moses, were engaged in the keeping of sheep. It was an occupation favourable for meditation and converse with God.—*Came to the mount of God.* Horeb was called the mountain of God by way of anticipation, as Moses wrote for those who knew it by that title, after the law had there been given.—*The angel of the Lord.* The name Lord or Jehovah is afterwards assumed; vers. 4, 6. This angel is generally supposed to have been the Son of God; Acts xxxvii. 38. Fire is a scriptural emblem of the holiness and justice of God. It is an emblem of the afflictions and trials by which He proves and purifies His people, and also of that baptism of the Holy Ghost, by which the dross of sinful affections is consumed, and the soul transformed into His own nature and image. The fire in the bush was intended to describe the state of Israel in Egypt, in the furnace of affliction and yet unconsumed.—*Put off thy shoes.* This was a sign of reverence which still prevails in the East.—*Moses hid his face,* from alarm and from a becoming sense of humility and reverence. God revealed himself to him as the God of his father, the God of Abraham, &c.; v. 6

THE SYMPATHY OF GOD.

The Lord saw the oppression of the oppressed, and heard the cry of his people. Though the eye of God appeared to the former to be covered by the clouds so that He could not see, and the ear appeared to the latter that He could not hear, *He both saw and heard.* When the poor slave thought himself unnoticed and unknown, *God knew his sorrows.* Notwithstanding the ignorance, idolatry, and wickedness of His people, the Lord acknowledged them as His people, because of their relation to Abraham. The Lord shewed His interest in them by coming down to deliver them; ver. 8.

THE DIRECTION TO MOSES.

God chose Moses to be the deliverer; v. 10. Moses doubted his ability now, though he did not do so at the time he slew the Egyptian. He knew God, human nature, and himself better than he did at that time. God promised to be with him; ver. 12. This should have allayed his fears, and kept him from distrusting God.—What is his name? This implies that the Hebrews were not now familiar with the worship of God.—*I am He that exists.* This implies self-existence, independence, unchangeableness, incomprehensibility, and consummate perfection.—*I am and there is none else beside me.* All else have their being from God, and are entirely dependent on Him. **I AM THAT I AM.** Not *I was*, but *I am*, and *will be.* With Him the past, the present, and the future—all are one.

The title of Jehovah, the God of Abraham, &c., would remind the Israelites of His relations and engagements to them as the descendants of these illustrious patriarchs. The Lord had declared His *name*, as signifying eternal self-existence; and here He adds His *covenant relation* to the seed of Abraham, as the perpetual memorial of His former mercies, and security of future blessings to His Church.

Learn—1. The character of God. He is self-existent. He is the **I AM.** We may neglect Him, but He lives unchangeably the same. He is the source of all blessing—temporal and spiritual.

He knows all things. He knows all men—their thoughts, their imaginations, and their actions.

He is a compassionate God. "He knows their sorrows." Not a sigh, not a tear, not a groan escapes them, but He sees and hears it. He pities the poor slave. Especially does God pity the slave of sin. He has sent His Son into the world to save sinners.

He sent Moses to Israel. He sends Christ to you; Acts vii. 37. He sends Him to deliver you from worse than Egyptian bondage; Luke xiv. 47.

"IN HONOUR PREFERRING ONE ANOTHER."

Lois Vanderberg, with her shawl over her head, had been standing at the gate more than half an hour, in the chill evening air, looking vainly for her little brother, Pierre, when suddenly the boy appeared through the thick mist as if he had risen out of the earth.

"Ah, here you are," cried Lois, "how slowly you must have walked. Father has been waiting an hour for his paper. But come now, do hurry in out of the rain. We've got a splendid roaring fire for this dreary night, and we're going to have hot cakes for tea!"

But to this cheery intelligence little Pierre only responded, "I'm sure I don't care if we are," in such a dismal tone, that, as they entered the bright fire-lighted kitchen, Lois turned upon him a look of great anxiety.

"I'm afraid you're sick, Pierre," said she, seeing very clearly that something had gone wrong.

"No, don't trouble me; I'm only tired."

Nevertheless, Lois noticed that when he had hung away his damp coat and tipped, he seated himself by the window as far as possible from the bright cheerful fire, and hid his head behind the curtain.

"Now, Pierre," she whispered, following him, "you *must* tell me what has happened."

"Don't ask me, sister," said Pierre, melting a little, "I'm ashamed to tell."

But Lois persisted, and she had such kind, "taking" ways, that as Pierre would have told you, she never let down her little bucket of sympathy into Pierre's heart without drawing up nearly all of his troubles.

"Well, Lois," said he slowly, "in the first place, you know how anxious father has been that I should be 'head boy' at school this year, and you know how I've studied early and late, and haven't missed a single lesson?"

"Yes, indeed," cried Lois.

"Then you know that Herbert Bell is the only other boy that has been studying so hard, and I'm sure I can remember at least three times he has missed this quarter."

"Yes, well?"

"Well, to-day, Mr. Simmons asked me—"

to stay a few minutes after school, and when the scholars were all gone, he said—

"I've been very much pleased with some of my scholars lately, and I've been thinking I should like to give the one who has the most good marks at the end of the quarter some reward for his industry and behaviour. Now what should you think a boy, about *your* age, would like best for a present this winter? O Lois, you can't think how my heart beat! I thought right away, 'I'm sure he means *me*,' and I'm afraid he knew that I thought so, for it seemed to burn right through my cheeks. But in a minute I said, just as carelessly as I could, 'Why, I should think, sir, a boy couldn't like anything better than a nice little sled, with iron shoes, and painted bright red,' for you know, Lois, I've wanted one three winters, and father never could afford it, and now 'times' are harder than ever. Well, he smiled, and said he should think that would please a boy, and then he looked right in my face, and said, 'What do you think of Herbert Bell? Isn't he about as good a scholar as we have in the school?' I declare, Lois, if my cheeks burned before, I felt *this* time as if my whole head had tumbled off into the stove, and I was choking with the smoke besides. I couldn't speak for a moment, but just pretended I had a terrible cough, and by and by I just managed to say—

"Yes, sir, I don't believe there's a better fellow in all the world."

"That's all right," said Mr. Simmons, very kindly, "and now I've one more favour to ask of you. As you and Herbert are such very good friends, your tastes must be something alike, and I should like some pleasant Saturday to take you with me to the city, to help me pick out just the right kind of a sled, for it's a good while since I was a boy, and I'm afraid I don't know so much about *some* things as I did then."

"I hardly remember what I said, sister, but pretty soon I was out on the road, thinking I knew just how that wicked old Haman felt, for you see I thought I was the boy Mr. Simmons delighted to honour, and instead of that I must go to B—
and pick out a pretty sled for my Mordecai." Pierre's voice shook, and leaning his hand against the window he stared out into the dark, rainy night.

"But, Pierre," said Lois, "I'm sure you're not at all like that bad Haman. You certainly don't hate your Mordecai."

"No indeed, sister; there's all the comfort there is in the matter."

"Not at all," cried Lois; "there's something more. I think it was a very great honour for Mr. Simmons to consult you about the present. It showed that he thought you had a noble, generous heart, and were above all feelings of envy and jealousy."

"I never thought of *that*," said Pierre, brightening; "but then, sister," he added more sadly, "I'm pretty sure he saw what I was thinking about, and knew just how mean I was."

"Not so *very* mean after all," said Lois, smiling. "It was kind in you to praise Herbert!"

"Why, sister," interrupted Pierre, with a look of surprise, "What else could I do? Didn't I have to tell the *truth*?"

"To be sure," said Lois, smiling still more, "but I do not believe Mr. Simmons has such a very poor opinion of you. He knows very well how hard it is for a boy who has studied as *you* have, to stand aside, and let some one else take the first place. Ah, yes, little Pierre, we all have to struggle very hard and pray a great deal before we can very cheerfully 'in honour prefer one another.'"

"But you can do it at last, sister?"

"Oh, yes; we can so far conquer our selfishness for Christ's sake, that at last we shall very much prefer other people's happiness to our own."

Pierre looked thoughtful, but was much comforted, and so far reconciled to life, that the call to supper and nice hot cakes was by no means disregarded.

One pleasant Saturday a few weeks after Pierre rushed in with a bright face.

"Well, sister, it's done at last. I and Mr. Simmons have bought the sled, and it's a regular beauty. It's name is 'Rocket,' and it's the brightest red. Oh, won't Herbert's eyes snap! But now, sister, do you think it was wrong for me to wish for one too? There were plenty more *beauties* in the store, but they cost money," and little Pierre sighed. "Never mind," he continued bravely, "Herbert is just the best fellow,—and I really do think at last, that if only one of us could have it, I would

rather it should be he, and I think I'll give him my little flag, too, so every thing will be complete, and people will know the establishment goes for the 'Union.' And oh, sister, I almost forgot,—examination will end Wednesday, and I'm to have the honour of presenting the sled. But do you know, I'm afraid Herbert half suspects, for he is in the greatest spirits, and says he knows something splendid that's going to happen before long. Some of the boys have got hold of it, too, I'm sure, for one of them said to-day, 'There's something going on right under your nose, Pierre, but Dutch people never get their eyes open till 4 o'clock.' I was so happy I didn't mind it a bit, and only laughed to think how much wiser I was than any of them."

The great Wednesday came. Herbert and Pierre passed very fine examinations, and at the close Pierre arose to deliver the speech which had been carefully prepared for the occasion.

"Herbert Bell," began Pierre, but, (how awkward!) there was Herbert coming forward, too, and beginning—

"Pierre Vanderberg—"

"Keep still, Herbert," whispered Pierre, "I am to make a speech, and present you with a sled."

"Just exactly what I am going to do for you," whispered back Herbert, with a merry laugh.

Poor bewildered Pierre looked imploringly at Mr. Simmons, who rising said—

"I believe I shall have to decide this matter, and say that the sled belongs to Pierre Vanderberg, who has ten more good marks than Herbert."

"O Mr. Simmons," cried poor Pierre, but entirely broke down, while Herbert shook his head as if it were a pump-handle. Lois wiped her eyes in a corner, and the boys who were all in the secret, made the old school-room shake with a perfect tempest of applause.

M. L. P.

THE RECONCILIATION.

"I once picked up a man in a market-place. It was said to me, 'He is a brute—let him alone.' I took him home with me, and kept him fourteen days and nights through his delirium; and he nearly frightened Mary out of her wits, one night, chasing her all round the house with a boot in

his hand. But she recovered her wits, and he recovered his. He said to me, 'You wouldn't think I had a wife and child?'—'Well, I shouldn't.' 'Yes, I have—and God bless her dear little heart. My Mary, is as pretty a little wife as ever stepped,' said he. I asked him where they lived. 'They live two miles away from here.'—'When did you see them last?' 'About two years ago.' Then he told me his sad story. I said, 'You must go back again.' 'No,' he replied, 'I mustn't go back. I wont—my wife is better without me than with me. I will not go back any more. I have knocked her, and kicked her, and abused her; do you suppose I will go back again?' But at length he consented to accompany me to the house. I knocked at the door and his wife opened it. 'Is this Mrs. Richardson?' 'Yes, sir.' 'Well, this is Mr. Richardson, and Mr. Richardson, this is Mrs. Richardson. Now come into the house.' They went in. The wife sat on one side of the room, and the man on the other. I wanted to see who would speak first; and it was the woman. But before she spoke she fidgeted a good deal. She pulled up her apron till she got hold of the hem, and then she pulled it down again. Then she folded it up closely, and jerked it out through her fingers, an inch at a time; and then spread it all down again; and then she looked all about the room, and said, 'Well, William,' and he said, 'Well, Mary.' He had a large handkerchief round his neck, and she said, 'You had better take the handkerchief off, you'll need it when you go out.' He began to fumble about it. The knot was large enough; he could have untied it, if he had liked, but he said, 'Will you untie it Mary?' And she worked away at it; but somehow or other, her fingers were clumsy, and she could not get it off;—their eyes met, and the love light was not all quenched; he opened his arms gently, and she fell into them. If you had seen those white arms clasped about his neck, and he sobbing on her bosom, and the child looking in wonder first at one, and then at the other, you would have said, 'It is not a brute, it is a man, with a great warm heart in his breast. Oh, how many hearts and homes might be cheered if Christian men and women would visit poor drunkards, and point them to the cross of Christ.'—*J. B. Gough.*

SKILL IN SOUL-SAVING.

A proud, passionate sinner once moved into the neighbourhood of a devoted minister, and began a career of sin which grieved the good and increased the corruption of the wicked. His avowed purpose to insult any clergyman who should presume to address him, kept the minister from calling upon him at once, but did not prevent him from prayerfully watching for an opportunity.

This came sooner than he expected. The blaspheming sinner was struck down by severe sickness. "I will see him," said the minister.

"If you do he will insult you," said the friend who had informed him of the man's sickness.

"I will see him, nevertheless, and look to God for guidance and blessing," replied the minister.

Accordingly he called, and was shown into a parlour, where he found the sick man lying on an old sofa. With great kindness he asked after his health, and received curt, almost uncivil replies. Then, without saying one word of his own respecting religion, he opened his Bible and said:

"If you please I will read to you?"

Without waiting for a reply, he proceeded to read the words of Jesus in the fifteenth chapter of Luke, after which he offered a short, simple prayer, bade the man farewell, and left.

The next day he called again, read the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, prayed, and left as before. This was repeated several days. Kindness, appropriate selections from the Word of God, prayer, in which the minister cheerfully *classed himself with the sick man as needing mercy*, and secret prayer for God's blessing, were the only weapons he employed. Now, mark the result!

After two weeks the sick man broke down, grasped the minister's hands, wept, confessed himself a sinner, and said he was a wonder to himself.

"It is God," replied the minister; "I have not spoken a word. God has spoken. He has done this."

"Yes," said the man, "I see it now. If you had spoken a single word of your own to me when first you came, or for some time after, I would not have borne it.

Weak as I was, I should have tried to turn you out of my house. I was astonished at your daring to come to me. You took me by surprise. I could not be angry when you asked with such a kind voice after my health. You read me those beautiful words. I knew they were not your own words, but God's own words, and I was silent. You shut the book, and I thought you would begin to reproach me and tell me what a sinful wretch I was, and then would be my time to speak; but I looked up and saw you on your knees, and heard you praying for me, and then, without another word, you were gone."

It is enough to add that this Anakim among sinners was soon after converted, and after a few weeks of beautiful devotedness to Jesus, passed through the gates of the grave crying victory through the blood of the Lamb.

That this sinner was pulled out of the burning by the *skill*, as well as the fidelity of the minister, is placed beyond all doubt by the testimony of the man himself. Faithfulness alone would not have succeeded, but *faithfulness joined to skill* did the work. Let the worker for souls study this fact carefully, as illustrating the philosophy of soul-saving. Perhaps it may give him light on the cause of his own lack of success. He has, it may be, a desire to do good; he labours with sinners patiently, he utters truth in their ears, he depends on the Spirit for success, but he has no evidences of his success. Why? He lacks *skill, tact, wisdom*. He is not *wise to win souls*. He needs to study human nature more closely. Give him *skill* in addition to his present qualities, and he would "slay his thousands" for the Lord.

Look well to this point, dear fellow-labourer for Christ, and may the Holy Ghost make you "*wise to win souls*"—*Zion's Herald*.

SING ALL.

Some men cannot sing; they are exceptions; but hardly more so than lame men are exceptions to the pleasure and right of walking. If you can sing, you ought to sing, and no chorister, presbyter, bishop, or Pope ought to be allowed to seal your lips with dumbness, when the praises of your Lord are ringing around you. Take

the psalm book, then, and sing away as best you can. Set all the family, little ones and all, to singing, book in hand, making melody in your hearts, singing as *scientifically* as you can, but singing spiritually and spontaneously, science or no science. "Every man's house," says the old English Common Law, "is his castle;" every man's pew, says common sense, should be his own choir; and he should see to it that no man or body of men shall usurp from him and his household the right of worshipping God in this as in other respects.

In order to make this right the better respected, *study* music as much as you can—and especially have the children trained in it. The service of God deserves to be done always in the best possible manner. If you cannot study the "science," study well, at least, the most common tunes, and then sing away as best you can. Sing out your pilgrimage with a brave and joyous heart, till you join the choirs above with songs of everlasting deliverance.

And now let no man say there is a touch of fanaticism in these views. There is a common sense and sound evangelical theology in them. Were they universally and simultaneously adopted, they would throw a new charm upon all our public worship; a new joy into the hearts of all our people; a new attraction to the outside world around all our sanctuaries. Our preaching would be more spirited, our congregations more alive. Church music was once a power among us, and a mighty one; it should become so again. Shall it be? Who-soever is for the affirmative, let him begin to sing it forth on the next Sabbath.—*Christian Advocate.*

OF HEAVEN.

If heaven doth not enter into us by way of *holiness*, we shall never enter into heaven by way of *happiness*.

If you would lay up a treasure of glory in heaven, lay up a treasure of grace in your hearts.

If your souls are rich in grace, they will be rich in glory.

The more you do for God in this world, the more God will do for you in the world to come.

As heaven is kept for the saints by Christ, so they are kept for heaven by the Spirit.

In heaven all God's servants will be abundantly satisfied with his dealings and dispensations with them; and shall see how all conduced like so many winds, to bring them to their heaven; and how, even the roughest blasts help to bring them homeward.

In heaven God will never hide his face more, nor the devil shew his more. earth.

If thou lovest to worship God here below, God will take thee up to worship him above. Thou shalt change thy place, but not thine employment.

Heaven is a day without a cloud to darken it, and without a night to end it.

We would be seated in the heavenly *Canaan*, but are loth to be scattered with the briars and thorns of the *wilderness*.

In heaven there is the presence of all good, and the absence of all evil.

Grace and glory differ but as the bud and the blossom: What is grace, but glory begun? What is glory, but grace perfected?

We may hope for a place in heaven, if our hearts are made suitable to the state of heaven.

If there will be any grief in heaven, sure it will be for this, that we have done no more for God on earth.

BOASTED REASON.

Within a hundred and fifty years, how has the boasted power of reason changed! It has piled up one thing, and then another day it has laughed at its own handiwork, demolished its own castle, and constructed another, and the next day a third. It has a thousand dresses. Once it came forth like a fool, with its bells, heralded by Voltaire; then it came out a braggart bully, like Tom Paine; then it changed its course, and assumed another shape, till forsooth, we have it in the base, bestial secularism of the present day, which looks for nought but the earth, keeps its nose upon the ground, and, like the beast, thinks this world is enough; or looks for another through seeking this. On all its systems of religion, or non-religion, may be written, "Evanescient; fading as the flower, fleeting as the meteor, frail and unreal as a vapour." But of Christ's religion it shall be said, "His name shall endure for ever."—*Spurgeon.*