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THE GOOD NEWS:

A MONTHLY PERIODICAL DEVOTED TO
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

VOL. 6.]

JANUARY, 1866.

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CONTENTS:

HEAVENLY WISDOM. By Rev. P. D. Muir, A.B., Montreal	1	How to do good	28
Good Counsel	5	The Ways of the Holy Ghost	29
"The Strength of Sin is the Law."	6	A Refuge from the Storm	30
This Year you may die	7	Eternity!	31
Growing in Grace	9	'Is God influenced by Prayer,'	32
JESUS AND THE RESURRECTION.		No time to read	32
By A. C. GILLIES	10	The Lord of the Harvest	33
The Bag of Days	12	CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE	36
The Heavenly Rest	13	Conversion of Martin Boos, an	
Apostolic Sighs	13	Evangelical Danish priest	36
How to be Edified with		Memories above	37
Preaching	13	The Deceitful Hope	38
Temptation	16	The Spirit of the Father	40
Do what you can	17	A Nobleman who could not	
Christian Unity	20	say the Lord's Prayer	41
The Land of Beulah	22	The Spark and the Flame	42
Prepared for the Worst	23	Living to Purpose	43
Jesus in Company with His		Footsteps	44
Disciples	24	Peacemakers	45
A Reminiscence of my Prison		The Prodigal Reclaimed	47
Life. By Manuel Matamoros	26		
The Teacher's Aim, and how		POETRY.	
to secure it	27	Hymn to the Holy Spirit	22
		Wishing and Waiting	25
		Divine Ejaculation	48

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TO SUBSCRIBERS.

We have to apologize to the subscribers of the GOOD NEWS for the delay in this month's issue. As many of them are aware, we removed about the beginning of the month from Prescott, C. W., to the City of Montreal, and through the press of business incident to that, and the establishment of a new weekly paper, it has been delayed.

The engraver who has been preparing a design for a cover, through illness, was unable to complete it in time for the present number. We expect to have it in use on the February number.

The Index of Contents for 1865 will be sent to subscribers as soon as we can get it ready.

Our accounts for 1866 will be sent with next number.

The GOOD NEWS for February will not likely be up to time, but we hope to have the March number on time.

HEAVENLY WISDOM.

BY REV. P. D. MUIR, A.B., MONTREAL, C.E.

“Wisdom is the principal thing.”—PROV. IV. 7.

When you are reading this, dear children, the new year will have just begun. The beginning of a year is very suitable for serious thoughts, for who knows what will be before the end of it. The new year is a time for good wishes. “A happy new year” is a wish often expressed.—The following address is meant to show you how this and every year may be “happy.” If you wish to be happy wisdom is the principal thing.

Once upon a time a number of men were standing in a row. They were prisoners, rebels who had fought against the government to which they belonged. And now they were standing there to hear their sentence read. It was this. Every tenth man was to be pardoned, and the rest were to be hanged. And so they at once began to draw lots who it should be. This was the way the lots were drawn. Tickets with numbers printed on them were put into a box and shaken together. Then each drew one and whoever drew the numbers 10, 20, 30, or any number ending with a 0, was to be pardoned. Now think how anxiously the poor men would draw their tickets, and how eagerly they would look to see if the 0 was there. That 0 was the principal thing. Their lives depended on it. If it was there they might go home and be happy with their friends. But if not, they go to a dark dungeon, and wait in chains till a scaffold was prepared, and then come out and suffer a painful death. Now this is precisely your position, dear children. You are drawing lots which must determine whether you are to be permitted to have a happy life, or whether you are to

be cut off from all happiness and reserved in chains for the judgment of the great day. But there is this difference in your case—that it is not one in ten only that may draw the happy lot, but all may.—Though sometimes one cannot help fearing that perhaps not even so many will. And there is this great difference also, that you have not to draw your lot blindly. You are told beforehand how to choose, and the text which I have chosen is one of the directions given to guide you. Wisdom is the principal thing. Wisdom is the Number which determines your life or death.

Now the Bible is Wisdom. It tells you the best things—in the best way—on the best authority. What do you want most to know? Is it not how you may be happy here and hereafter? Now there are many people who will try to tell you how you may be happy here in this world. They do not all agree among themselves, but they are all very sure that their way is right, and even laugh at those who try any other way. But nobody can tell you how you may be happy hereafter, except as the Bible says. Now think for yourselves. You are young, but you can think this out for yourselves if you try. Must not that way which is best to make you happy hereafter be also the best to make you happy here. This is what the Bible says, and do you not see for yourselves that it must be true? Is not this God's world as well as that to which we are going? Is it not the same God that rules this and that, and are not we ourselves the same? The heathen are not so

foolish as some that call themselves Christians. They do not know what will really make them happy hereafter, but they believe it must be the same as makes them happy here. So they speak of happy hunting grounds, and of feasting in the other world, and some that are very savage speak of drinking out of the skulls of their enemies. Horrible! you say. What a strange heaven to fancy! Yes; but it is at least consistent and not so absurd as when people fancy that they can be happy one way all their life before they die, and quite another and different way after they die.

Again, the Bible tells us that to be happy here or hereafter, it is not so much necessary to be rich or to have many friends, or even to be healthy, as it is to have a new heart. It says that if we have not the new heart we cannot be happy, though we had all the nice things that wealth can buy, and all the friends the world can furnish, and even the best of health, so that we can run about and enjoy ourselves as much as we please; for that we would soon get tired of them all and discontented, and wish for something else that we could not get. But if we have the new heart, even if we have no nice things at all or hardly any, and though our earthly friends were few, and even if we were sick and in pain, we could be happy; because we should have great happiness in the friendship of God, and Jesus would comfort us, and the Holy Spirit would whisper such sweet things to us, and because we would be so contented with every little thing we had, and have such comfort in it that we would never tire, so much so indeed that it would seem that if God would give us more we could hardly bear it for joy. And yet God would be continually giving us more and more, till at last he would open the door of heaven itself and take us in, and then we would be

so happy that we would have to sing with all our might just to be able to bear it, it would be such a fulness of joy.

Now this is what the Bible says, and it says it in so many ways that even a child can understand it, and see that it is true. And it says it on the best of all authority—on the authority of God who knows best, for He made us and knows all about us. And he means us well, for he loves us, and gave His Son to save us and His Bible to make us wise.

And the Bible tells us also how we may get the new heart. It would not be wisdom without that, you know. It would be a poor thing to tell us what is best to get, if we are not told at the same time how it is to be got. It tells us that the new heart is God's gift. We cannot get it in any other way, but by getting it from God. We cannot make it ourselves, nor can any of our friends give it to us. Our friends and kind teachers try to do us good, and if we do not set ourselves against it, we will get great good from them. If we try hard we might make ourselves a great deal better than we are, more prudent and considerate and kind, and so a great deal better off than we could be if we were thoughtless and selfish, only thinking what we would like best for the moment. But the essential thing, the principal thing, we cannot get in either of these ways. No teaching of others will instill it; no effort of our own will create it; God must give it. The new heart is God's work, the work of God's Holy Spirit, and it is wisdom to know it. For the new heart is not further off, but nearer to us on this account. All we have to do is to ask it, for Jesus' sake, and keep asking, and we will be sure to get it. God offers to give it, and to give it simply for the asking. The Holy Spirit—it is very strange, children, but it is true—the Holy Spirit will come down into our hearts and brood over

them, as we read in the first chapter of Genesis he did over the great waste of waters. And then there will be something new within us, a new creation, as the Bible says. And God will look down and say it is good. And the morning stars, that is the angels, will sing together and the sons of God, that is the holy saints, will shout for joy. But God did not create the world in one day, but in six, and if he takes six days, or six years, or all your life, to finish the new creation in you, you must not doubt his word, nor grow weary of praying to him. Is that too long to wait? No; it is not too long, though all who really know what it is are just as anxious as they can be to have it completed soon. Nor must you doubt his word if it does not come just as you think to expect. Suppose you had been with the angels when they came down to see how God would create a world. You hear God saying, "Let there be light," and you look down and see—what? A beautiful world? No; a great, black, tossing mass of waters. And you say, "Is that the beautiful world, or ever to be?" But the angels would say, "Wait and you will see; God is only beginning yet;" or again when the dry land began to appear, all bare and rocky, and grim and grey, you would feel inclined to say, "Is that the beautiful earth?" But the angels would still bid you wait and not be impatient. And what would you at length see when God's time came? The grey rocks covered with green verdure and trees and lovely flowers; the black waters—black no more—sparkling in the sun and tossing their white crests about as if they knew and rejoiced; and every where on the earth, in the air, and in the waters, multitudes of happy, living things, and you, too, would say, "It is very good." And what if it should be so with you? if God's light should show you only black

sin first? You must not doubt that God is hearing your prayer, and that by-and-by your new heart will show as the fair, green earth, with its lovely fruits and flowers, and happy living creatures. Do not doubt, but pray.

But the Bible tells us further what like this new heart is—not merely that we may know when we have it—for we can hardly help knowing that, you see, when it makes us so contented and happy, and makes God so near and so dear to us—but that we may try to have those thoughts and feelings in which it mainly shows itself. For though we cannot make a new heart ourselves, we can try to think the new heart's thoughts, and feel the new heart's feelings; and when we do so after praying for the Spirit, and in hope of the Spirit's help, the Spirit is sure to help us all the more—the more we try. And as the blessed work goes on the faster, and we the quicker get holy and happy in God and God's great love.

The Bible says that the new heart mainly shows itself in humble, holy, happy thoughts of Jesus the blessed Saviour—Humble thoughts such as this—how unworthy we are of such a Saviour, and how undeserving of all the love he has shown and is still showing us; how great our sins must be to need Christ's great sufferings to put them away and get them pardoned, and how cruel and unkind it is for us to care so little for him who cared so much for us. Holy thoughts such as this—how pure and good our Saviour is; how he hates our sins even while he loves us sinners; how much he wishes us to be holy like himself and like our Father in heaven, and how much we ought to strive to be like him, out of love to him, and to the Father who gave him to us, to be our Saviour and our example. And happy thoughts such as this—how good it is that Jesus loves and gave himself for us, and

how he cares for us and watches over us and is ever ready to help us; how for his sake God pardons us and is pleased with us, though we so often do what is wrong; and how he blesses us day by day, and shows how much he loves for Christ's sake, by every thing he lets happen to us. And how true all this is, though none would have thought it, because God says so, and assures us that we may believe it and be glad in it though we do not feel in the very least that we deserve it. These and such like thoughts spring from the new heart, and we must try to have them, that the new heart may grow within us. For the new heart grows by exercise just like any other part of us.

Now the Bible helps us greatly to such thoughts as these, and so the Bible is wisdom. And the Holy Spirit too will help us, taking the things of Christ and showing them unto us, for the Holy Spirit is wisdom. And when we read the Bible and pray for the Holy Spirit, we find so many things to make us think just such thoughts, that by-and-by it becomes a habit, and we think them all the time, and so the new heart grows and we get happy, O, so happy, in God's love.

Now, see if you can recall what we have said. Wisdom is the principal thing. The Bible is wisdom. The Bible tells us how to be happy here and hereafter. The one thing needful is the new heart. The new heart is God's gift. The way to get it is to ask and to keep asking, for the new heart is not completed in a day. We must try as well as ask,—try to have humble, holy, happy thoughts of Jesus.—The Bible will help us, and the Holy Spirit too. So we must read the Bible and pray for the Holy Spirit, while we try to think of Jesus in a humble, holy and happy way.

Children, will you try? Would you

like to try? If so let me give you some advices.

1. Get a Bible of your own, a good, stout, well-bound Bible, one that will last you all your life. It is a great help to have your own Bible to be your constant companion, and a sweet thing when you come to be old, to read in the same Bible you used to have when you were a child. So if you have not a Bible already that you think will do you all your life, I would have you save up all your money till you can buy one with good stout paper, and good strong binding, which will not soon wear out; and when you have got it take great care of it. Do not let a speck get on it. Use it reverently, as God's Word should be used. Handle it as if you felt it was both a precious and a holy thing, as indeed it is, for it is God's Word.

2. When you get your Bible, read it, and, before you get it, read any one you are at liberty to use—often, slowly, carefully, a little at a time, just as much as you can remember if it is only two or three verses, and think over it. Take a great deal of pains, for it is worth it all, as you will find more and more the more you come to understand. Remember it is wisdom, and wisdom is the principal thing.

3. Pray constantly for the Holy Spirit to enable you to understand the Bible, to enable you to learn Christ from the Bible. Never open it without first praying that God would send his Holy Spirit into your heart to enable you to understand the Scripture, and never close it without praying that the Holy Spirit would imprint on your heart what you have just learned.

4. Search diligently and prayerfully in the Scriptures for what may help you to think of Jesus in that humble and holy and happy way of which I have spoken, and entreat the Spirit to guide you in

your search. You will be astonished how full the Bible is of Jesus, and how much there is everywhere, even where you would hardly expect it, to make you think of him.

5. Try hard, and that all the time, to live accordingly. Be humbly mindful while you try, of your need of the Holy Spirit to help you, and never forget that you have always Jesus to go to, and your Father in heaven for that and everything else you need. Never say, if I had this or that I could do better. God knows what is best for you, and will give you everything you really need, if you ask. Remember if you are depending ever so little on yourself you will be sure to give up, and that would be terrible; but if you are trusting to God you will not give up, and by-and-by you will find that though hard at first, wisdom's ways are pleasantest and her paths are peace.

GOOD COUNSEL.

Going up Oxford Street the other day, my attention was directed to a dial over a house of business, under which was written, "DELAY NOT, TIME FLIES!" Here, I thought, is good advice. I know not what was the precise idea which the writer wished to convey; but it is applicable to a variety of subjects. Let us look at a few.

Have you had a quarrel with any one? "Delay not" to make it up, for "time flies," and if you do not become reconciled soon, the opportunity will perhaps pass away. Live not at enmity with any one, for this is contrary to the Law, which says, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." It is contrary to the Gospel, which says, "Be kindly affectioned one to another." It is contrary to your Example, which is the Lord Jesus Christ, who prayed for his very murderers, saying, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath."

Have you made an engagement? "Delay" not to fulfil, for "time flies." Now you may realize your obligation, and discharge it; but if you procrastinate, you may lose the opportunity forever. Have you engaged to work for God? Then take your place, work while it is called to-day, "time flies," and working will soon be over. Have you engaged to give anything to the cause of God? Redeem your pledge, the present time may be lent you for the purpose, to-morrow may be too late.

Have you been reconciled to God?—Are you at peace with him? If not, "delay not, time flies," and you may be called away in an unreconciled state. Death is at the door. The Judge is on his way. The great white throne will soon appear, the books will be opened, and we shall all be judged according to those things which are written in the books, every one according to his works. Live no longer God's enemy, lest you should die so; for it must be truly dreadful to enter his presence, after having lived here for years in a state of enmity with him and opposition to him. Oh, be reconciled to him! He beseeches you by us, to cast away your weapons of rebellion, to submit to his method of salvation, and to receive a full pardon at his hands. Can you refuse?

Have you secured a Friend who can and will stand by you in all your troubles, and sustain you in your last dying struggles? "Delay not, time flies," and you may need such a friend before you have secured him. There is only One who can be all that you want a friend to be, and that is Jesus. He is a friend that loveth at all times—a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. But do you *know* him? Are you *familiar* with him? Can you *trust* him? Have you *committed* the keeping of your soul to him? He only can soothe your sorrows, supply your wants, guide your steps, conquer your foes, and make you more than a conqueror over sin, death, hell, and the grave. His friendship may be secured; but "delay not, time flies,"—if you neglect to seek him now you may fail to find him when you wish.

Have you sought grace for future trials, that you may bear them with Chris-

tian patience, and be improved by them in your Christian character? If not, "delay not, time flies." There is a fulness of grace in Jesus. It is to be had. But it must be sought, and sought early, earnestly, and with importunity. The apostle says, "Let us have grace." "Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." Jesus is waiting to be gracious. God delighteth in mercy. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

Have you obtained satisfactory evidence for heaven? If not, "delay not, time flies." Live not in a world like this, in times like these, without the inward witness of the Holy Spirit, without spiritual assurance that if your earthly house, which is a tabernacle, be dissolved, you have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. In a word, whatever good remains to be done, whatever evil remains to be overcome, whatever engagements have to be fulfilled, whatever duty ought to be performed, think of the inscription on the dial, "DELAY NOT, TIME FLIES." " whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is neither work nor device in the grave to which we are fast hastening. Be not slothful, but imitators of them who, through faith and patience, now inherit the promises." "Time flies," therefore "delay not" to flee from danger, to flee to Jesus, and to secure the gift of God, which is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

"THE STRENGTH OF SIN IS THE LAW."

BY THE REV. WILLIAM TAIT, M.A., RUGBY.

"The strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. xv. 56, 57.

It requires great boldness to announce any religious truth, however unquestionable, which shocks the feelings and prejudices of those who listen to us. Thus we are told by St. Paul that Esaias was very bold in announcing his nation's offence and the ingathering of the Gentiles. To

the men of his generation such statements appeared blasphemous. But St. Paul himself is equally bold in his words now before us. The holy law of God the strength of sin!! What would his devout but unenlightened countrymen think of so astounding a statement? They imagined that the law would teach them all that was good, and lead them at last to salvation. With what horror then would they regard the man who told them plainly that it would teach them all that was evil, and conduct them at last to perdition?

He tells us the same. If the law be sought to for salvation, this is indeed its character. It is "the strength of sin," and sin is man's destroyer.

"How can the holy law," it is asked, be "the strength of sin?" Because it is holy. If it could lower its demands to meet the ability of the fallen creature, it might encourage him to make some efforts after goodness. But it cannot do so. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," it says, "with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself; this do, and thou shalt live." The sinner answers, I cannot do so—accept my imperfect endeavours. The law refuses to accept them. It is the Divine standard of righteousness; not one jot or tittle of its demands can be abated. But by setting before us an unattainable perfection, it drives us into sin. Nothing so strengthens evil as despair of attaining to good.

And this is not all. The law, because it is holy, has a sentence as well as a command; it debars the sinner from the presence of God. The leper among the sons of Israel, was put forth of the camp; the plague-spot was upon him. A more terrible leprosy is upon us, which God alone can heal. He alone can cleanse the heart, He alone can order the unruly will and affections, He alone can give the victory over evil, He alone can enable for what is good. But as often as we would come to this Blessed Healer, the condemning law is in our way. The very disease which requires the remedy is between us and that Healer's hand. What, then, shall we do? We can only abide in alienation, we can only submit to sin's dominion. The

law pronounces our case utterly and eternally hopeless; "the strength of sin is the law."

There is "victory" in "our Lord Jesus Christ." The law's condemning sentence is cancelled in His blood; He has taken in it out of the way, nailing it to His cross. We may approach God without fear; we may invoke the Divine Healer's compassion—we may place ourselves in His merciful hands. The law's demand of righteousness is met in the Saviour's all-perfect obedience, and God "imputeth righteousness without works." Coming in that Saviour's name, we are in Him accepted, and our services are accepted too. There is encouragement to do God's will, and God himself is our help in doing it. As the law is the strength of sin, we find the gospel to be the strength of righteousness. And we say with St. Paul before us, "thanks be to God."

THIS YEAR YOU MAY DIE.

This year you may die—because you are ever and every where exposed to the causes that take away life.

This year you may die—because life is the most uncertain thing in the world, and you have not the assurance of a single moment beyond the present.

This year you may die—because some among your friends and acquaintances have died; and all the liabilities to death still remain for the rest who yet live.

This year you may die—for it is all but certain that many of the readers of this address will die this year, and why not you?

This year you may die, although there is now no indication of approaching death; for many during the past year have been cut off, and many during the present year will die, who may now seem very likely to live; and why not you?

How many, then, are the probabilities that before next new-year's-day *your* place will be vacant in the family, at the scene of your daily occupation, and in the house of God! Ought not this to induce a habit of solemn, pensive, devout, practical, profitable reflection. Bring home the thought. Take up the supposition, and say, "Yes,

it is possible, by no means improbable, that *I may die—this year.*"

Suppose you should, let me, on the ground of this supposition, ask you a few QUESTIONS.

Are you really prepared for your latter end, by being a partaker of genuine faith, the new birth, a holy life, and a heavenly mind? Or, are you a mere nominal professor, having a name to live, while you are dead? Are the fruits of a living branch in the true Vine brought forth by you? Do you recognize in yourself, and do others see in you, the marks of a state of grace? Put the question to your own hearts, ask yourselves, "What am I? Am I a spiritual, heavenly, humble, waiting, working servant of God? Am I really crucified with Christ, dead to the world, ripening for glory? Is there any thing heavenly about me? Is my assurance well settled, my joy established, my temper sanctified, my walk consistent? Am I *thus* ready for death, and like one waiting for the coming of the Master, with his loins girt about, and his lamp burning?"

Do, with your grave open before you, inquire into this matter. Are you living as you would wish to be found when the summons comes? Is your soul in that state in which you would desire it to be found when death strikes? Are you, in your devotional habits, your temper, your general behaviour, as you should be with eternity so near? Would you like to look up as you are, *just* as you are now, while reading these lines, and see your Master at his coming? *Would you die as you are?*

Is there no part of your conduct as a professor, which, upon the supposition you may die this year, you should alter? Nothing in the family, the closet, the shop, the church, the world, you should amend? What! death so near, and nothing to be done to meet it with confidence and joy!

I now, in addition to these questions, lay before you some SUGGESTIONS. If you die this year, not only all your plans, projects, and business of a worldly nature will stop, but all your advantages of a spiritual kind, all the means of grace, all the opportunities of salvation, all the aids to improvement, all the possibility of growth in grace, cease for ever. The last Sabbath, the last

sermon, the last sacramental season, the last prayer, are included in the present year! This year you are to arrive in heaven or hell, and to know the meaning of this glorious or this dreadful term! This year to see the end of time, and the beginning of eternity! How solemn! So soon to have your profession tested, not by man, but by God; so soon to be found by the King coming in to see the guests clothed in the wedding garment and approved, or destitute of the necessary robe, and cast into outer darkness! How many false professors will be unmasked this year, and appear with astonishment and horror, both to themselves and others as self-deceivers, formalists, and hypocrites! How many in reply to the plea, "Lord, Lord, I have eaten and drunk in thy presence," will hear the dreadful response, "Depart from me, I never knew you;" and thus find there is a way to destruction from the communion of the church. *What* you die this year, *that* you will be for ever; the seal of eternal destiny will be put upon you! From that time you will have no opportunity to correct mistakes; no second trial; no privilege of alteration. Your last words in time, and your first in eternity, might be, "I must be *what I am—for ever.*" All your anxieties, and doubts, and fears, about the reality of your religion, are about to be confirmed or dissipated—*for ever.* This year you are to be proved the most awful example of self-delusion, or the most blessed instance of well-founded hope which the universe contains. The grand secret, if secret it yet be, is about to be developed, whether you are a child of God or of the devil. Within a few months, perhaps weeks, that next moment after death, which fancy in vain attempts to paint, is to arrive, and, waking up in eternity, you will shout with rapture, "*Then I am in heaven!*" or utter with a shriek of despair and surprise the dreadful question, "What, am I in hell?" What a year are you entering upon then, if you should die before it closes? What disclosures are you about to witness, what discoveries to make! Many will grow rich this year; many will sink into poverty; many will be united in wedlock; many will be separated from their friends by death; many will leave their country and embark for a

foreign land—but you will *die*, and what is all else to this?

On the supposition you are prepared for death by simple faith in Christ for justification, by the regeneration of your heart through the influence of the Spirit, by a holy life, a heavenly mind, what *CONSOLATIONS* stand connected with, and are included in, the decree, "This year thou shalt die." There is, I know, a dark side of death; the antecedent sufferings, and mysterious nature of dying—the separation from near and dear relatives, and, perhaps, the leaving of them upon the care of Providence, without friends or wealth—the retirement from the visible to the invisible world—the dropping of the body, the dear companion of our spirit, in the tomb—the quitting of scenes of usefulness and enjoyment—all this, and so near too; all is trying to humanity; nature shudders. But grace turns to the bright side, and very, very bright it is. There is the promised presence, and omnipotent gracious support of Him who hath abolished death by dying, and brought life and immortality to light by rising and ascending; of Him who can make a dying bed "feel soft as downy pillows are!"—there is the release from all the evils of sin, the parent evil; and from sickness, poverty, toil, care, fear, sorrow—the dismal progeny. Yes, that last pulsation which leaves the heart still, sends the soul away for ever from every fruit and effect of the fall. O believer! lift up thy head, for thy redemption draweth nigh. What! this year, so soon, to shed thy last tear over sin or sorrow? This year to feel the last corruption, and to be agitated by the last anxiety? This year to experience thy blessed emancipation from all the countless ills that flesh is heir to? So soon to rise from the vale of tears, to the mount where God shall wipe away all tears from thy eyes; so soon to leave the field of conflict, cease the fight of faith, and lay aside the soldier's armour for the victor's crown? Nor is this all; heaven is more than negatives—it is life eternal; glory everlasting; immortal honour—it is the perfection of our nature in knowledge, holiness, and love; it is the presence of God, the vision of Christ, the society of angels, the communion of spirits made perfect—and death introdu-

ces to all; death is the dark avenue to ineffable, and to what would now be, insufferable, splendour; the rude and repulsive gate that opens into all that the Father hath devised, and the Son procured, and the Spirit promised, to them that love a triune God. Believer, if thou die this year, how near thou art to the Lamb in the midst of the throne, to the living fountain of waters, to the crown of glory, the golden harp, the white robe, and the palm branch of victory; this year, to approach the jasper walls, to pass through the pearly gates, to walk the golden streets, to worship in the temple of the Lord, and bask in the glory of that bright world in which Jehovah dwells! This year to be imparadised in the presence of God! And is it possible that it can be so near? Transporting thought! Blessed man! thou art now upon the mount, looking at the promised land with Moses, and soon thou shalt with Joshua pass the Jordan, and go in to take possession. The days of thy mourning will soon end. Though now for a season, if need be, thou art in heaviness through manifold temptations, yet that season is speedily to close. Only a few more days of toil, only a few more nights to wet thy couch with tears. Go forward with courage and confidence. Death is formidable only in front; the moment you have passed him, you will look back upon him as upon an angel of light; the stream may be dark, and the water deep; but it is narrow, fordable, and once crossed, it will never have to be crossed again. Have you not often in thought, if not in speech, congratulated those whose fetters of sin and tattered garments of flesh have been put off, and who have entered into liberty, and life, and joy, saying, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord?" And how soon are you to be among them, and be objects of congratulation to others! There is nothing, then, in this sentence, "This year thou shalt die," which should dismay or distress you!—James.

GROWING IN GRACE.

What is growing in grace but a growth in the knowledge of Jesus and his character, and so a realisation of his love toward us, with a corresponding love in return,

which will, under all circumstances, keep the soul in perfect peace? And although we are sinful, yet in seeing this abounding love we lose sight of our sins, and are lifted up out of all doubting as regards our eternal salvation, and so saved from all fear.

The question is asked—How can we have such views of Christ? There is no power in ourselves by which we may obtain such apprehension of Jesus, as shall lift the veil which hides his glory from us; and how can we love him whom we have not seen, and do not see?

Sometimes we hear this answer—Use the means, read, pray, work, do your whole duty, and thus becoming absorbed in Christ's work, you will forget self.

Ah, yes; but it is an uphill work to be faithful to my Beloved without this love burning in my heart. I do attend to all these duties, but it is not easy. If I felt thus toward my dearest earthly friend, my daily task would be hard indeed; but love quickens the step, lights up the feelings, and when this earthly love glows, we do not weary, and duties are pleasures.—Now how can I obtain this love for Jesus—such as shall make my duties to him pleasant?

What is it that begets this love for an earthly friend? Is it by looking at one's self, to see whether we love, that love is begotten in the heart? Is it by dint of effort, or by works of any kind, or by trying to bring about a right state of feeling, that we learn to love? Or what is it that creates or produces earthly love? Is it not by seeing, and dwelling in thought upon the object of our affections? How strange it would seem, if in forming earthly friendships we went about doing the same, using the same means to bring about an attachment that we use in our efforts to love Jesus; and then, too, how little real love exists in the heart, where one is looking within to see whether love exists.

The more, then, we study what Christ is, and the more we see of his character, the greater must be our love for him, and the more constant will be our communion with him; and the more we see how great is his love toward us the grander and more glorious will he appear; and as we behold

him, we shall be changed into his image, and become like him.

We cannot study the character and works of Jesus without loving him; and as love begets love, so duties cease to be tasks, but become real pleasures, in which we may take delight, even esteeming it a privilege to be used by him for any service whatever, looking to him to be sent, happy to go when and wherever he tells us to go, and ever waiting to do his will.

JESUS AND THE RESURRECTION.

BY A. C. GILLIES.

All the doctrines of the Bible are important, but the Resurrection of Jesus, like the spire of the village church above the rest of the town, seems to rise beyond them all, inasmuch as on its reality the divinity of every other doctrine turns. Hence "with great power gave the apostles witness of the RESURRECTION of the Lord Jesus; and great grace was upon them all." While Paul waited in Athens for the arrival of Silas and Timothy, he saw the city "wholly given to idolatry," the honor due only to God, ~~is~~ lavished upon inanimate objects, his fellow-beings, educated though they were, deplorably credulous and superstitious; and, in consequence of such exhibitions of human depravity, his spirit was so "stirred within him," that, in place of amusing himself with their statuary and painting, poetry and philosophy, what most scholars would have done, he at the risk of reputation and of life itself, called their attention to the Living God who created, sustains, and governs all things, in whom even they themselves lived, and moved, and had their being; and at the same time preached unto them "JESUS and the RESURRECTION." By the mysterious Providence of Him who reigns on High the determination of the Jews to prevent the resurrection, was so over-ruled as to hand down to all Chris-

tians the glorious tidings of the resurrection, accompanied by "infallible proofs." When the Jews "made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch," how foreign to their minds was the curious thought that they were even then acting as the heralds of Him who lay in the tomb; that they were, contrary to their own design, doing that which above all other things, would in after ages prove beyond dispute the resurrection, and consequently the Divinity, of Him whose name and cause they fully resolved to blot out from under Heaven! Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee, O God; and the remainder of wrath shalt Thou restrain! Of the many thousands of historical facts which people not only believe, but hold to be so certain that to doubt them would be evidence of insanity, we may safely say there is not one which is half so well authenticated as the resurrection of Christ. As for importance, nothing equal to it can be found in human history. Without the resurrection of Jesus, the Bible, man, life, death, immortality, Judgment, and Eternity are so many meaningless ciphers. The prayers of the pious, the groans of the injured, the tears of the widow, the agonies of the martyr, and that hope of glory, that golden crown which gladdened his heart as he fell a victim to the flame, and closed his eye in death amid the shouts of the multitude, are all fled to the dreary abodes of nonentity! But placed immediately after "Jesus and the Resurrection," these things with ten thousand others, assume an importance, a terrible significance, which, to all Eternity, will defy the calculating powers of all created beings. The resurrection declares Christ to be "the Son of God with power;" proclaims Him accepted in the room of guilty man; despoils Death of his sting, and the grave of her victory; shuts the gates of hell against all who obey Him; and to all

His people throws wide open the doors of everlasting glory; while His life, His spotless life, like the rising sun, sheds infallible light on that path which they are to travel to the bright abodes of immortality.

There are three ways of conveying instruction, and it is interesting for us to know that Jesus, while on earth, adopted these three different ways to explain the great doctrine of the resurrection to those around Him: 1. He taught it by PRECEPT when He said, "I am the resurrection, and the life. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth: they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." 2. He taught it by ILLUSTRATION when He stood on life's battle-field, surrounded by the bones of the slain, and compelled Death to cease his ravages, to drop his prey, and the Grave to restore the prisoners whom for a time she held in her dark dominion. Hence men could see with their eyes the reality of that doctrine which they had heard with their ears. 3. He taught it also by PERSONAL EXAMPLE when He went down into the grave, and on the third day burst through every barrier which human and satanic ingenuity could devise, and rose from the dead; at the same time bringing with Him "many bodies of the saints who slept" not only as trophies of His victory, but also as evidence to an astonished universe that He had now "destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and delivered them who through the fear of death ^{were} ~~are~~ ^{eye} ~~eyes~~ all their life-time subject to bondage." Those individuals who were raised to life before Christ rose from the dead, could not, properly speaking, be said to have been raised from the DEAD at all—they were raised from the GRAVE only,—be-

cause they were still subject to, and under the dominion of death; but when Christ rose, He rose "to die no more; death had no more dominion over Him;" and therefore "He is the first begotten from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence." Christ went down into the gloomy chambers of the grave, lay there for about THIRTY-SIX hours, then rose, and afterwards ascended to glory, in the capacity of a representative. Hence as all those who were represented by Adam, die in Adam; so all who were represented by Christ, rose in Christ, and ascended with Him to the mansions on High. Thus He became "the first fruits of them that slept." "Hear this, O dead! your nature then took wing, and rose to heaven, immortal with her King."

There is no greater difficulty in connection with the resurrection of humanity than there is in the creation of a sand-fly,—both are equally beyond the reach of human power. Man may curse the fig-tree, command Nature to suspend her laws, devils to depart, and the dead to live. But the tree, totally regardless of his anathemas, will still put forth her blossoms; Nature will move on in her usual majesty; and the dead shall remain as lifeless as ever, for the grave will prove unrelenting, and stern death inexorable. But Christ spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast. The Grave gave back her prisoners at His word; and Death dropped the victim at His bidding. Devils in confusion fled at His approach, declaring Him to be the Son of God: and even universal Nature veiled her face in His presence, dropped the sceptre from her hand, and allowed Him, as her Lord and Master, to reign supreme throughout her wide domain.

Who among the sons of men can look into the gloomy Grave, or enter the cold swellings of Jordan, if "JESUS and the RES-

RESURRECTION" be not there to say, "It is I; be not afraid." In the chamber of death where a beloved friend is about to breathe his last; the hand once warm, is now cold; the cheek pale, the pulse slow, the faltering tongue fails to make known his wants; the lamp burns dimly, the lowest whisper is far too loud, and the awful image of death is imprinted of every countenance present: yet if "Jesus and the Resurrection" is there, there will be joy, and peace, and light. "I will see you again, and your hearts shall rejoice," is the language of the dying. But if "Jesus and the Resurrection" be not there, the stones will immediately cry out. Egyptain darkness will seize every soul, and convert the chamber of death into the chamber of despair. In such a place, at such a time, and under such trying circumstances as these, to whom can man, poor dying man, look for help—on whom can he lean—to whom can he go—upon what downy pillow can he lay his aching and feverish head? To all these solemn and serious inquiries neither man nor angel can give but one reply—"JESUS and the RESURRECTION!" The Cemetery is a place over which the grass has been growing abundantly for the last six thousand years, being watered with the tears of broken hearted and bereaved humanity, of whom might be said what the Jews said of the affectionate Mary, "She goeth unto the grave to weep there." But "JESUS and the RESURRECTION," like the rising sun over the deep dark water, or like the moon and stars during the dark shades of night, adorn the Cemetery and beautify the tombs of the Sainted Dead. We love the Cemetery, because it is to us at once a "History" and a "Prophecy;" it presents to us the past, the present, and the future of its inhabitants,— there we read both the biographical and posthumous advice of the Departed Dead!

And above all, we love the Cemetery, because of JESUS,—but for Him death would be a calamity, and immortality a 'curse! To Thee, O blessed Jesus! Thy people owe their being, the preservation of their lives, the sacred influence of Thy thrice holy Religion, the hopes and hallowed prospects of a future state. In Thy presence there is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for ever more; and around Thy great white Throne in Heaven, the countless hosts of happy and ever blessed spirits eternally rejoice!

THE BAG OF DAYS.

Suppose you had a bag of nuts on your shoulder to carry, and yet if every boy you met made you give him a nut, your bag would soon be empty. We are all sent into this world by God, with a bag not of nuts, but of days. Sometimes death stops the little child before it has gone far with its bag of days, and its life in this world is closed. But perhaps you may live for many years; yet do not forget that time is always after you, taking now a day and again a day, and he will soon empty the largest bag of days. If the bag were one of nuts instead of days, people would feel the bag lighter, and inquire who had taken them; but many do not think that their bag of days is always getting lighter, and too many find it nearly empty before they scarcely think about it. Oh, we should never forget that every night we lie down to sleep, Time has taken another day out of our bag. We have no time to lose, we cannot afford to trifle, and therefore while life is before us we must learn to improve in what is good and useful, to be pure and holy, so that if we live to be old, we may look on the few days that are left in our bag without a sigh, nor regret the days lost or idly spent. That is a good prayer in the Bible, "Lord teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." Let us often think of our bag of days, and examine it, to reckon up how many Time has already taken away, and how many are left. Let us use every one

for the best purpose, and pray this good prayer to our Father, that we may not slight or abuse them.—*Talk with Little Ones.*

THE HEAVENLY REST.

Heaven's gates are wide enough to admit those who have been the *greatest sinners*, but they are too narrow for the admission of the *smallest sin!*—

"Those holy gates for ever bar
Pollution, sin, and shame;
None shall obtain admittance there
But followers of the Lamb."

Here, we are like patients in an hospital; hereafter, we shall be like guests in a palace. Here we may be cured of the disease of sin by Christ's healing power; hereafter we shall be glorified by Christ's presence in the world where there is no more sickness, nor any more pain. As no dead man can secure possession of any earthly estate, so no dead soul can inherit the kingdom of God. Some persons think it is a very difficult thing to find the way to heaven; but a poor man thought otherwise, for he said, "The way is simple enough, there are only three steps, namely, these—*out of sin, into Christ, up to glory.*" Robert Hall's conception of heaven was—*perfect rest*; for on earth he had for years the unrest of bodily suffering. Wilberforce's idea of heaven was—a *religion of perfect love*; he longed for loving unity among all the people of God, *both* views are correct. Read the glowing description which Bunyan gives at the close of his "Pilgrim's Progress."

A Welsh minister was asked if he thought the saints would know each other in heaven? he replied, "To be sure we shall! What, do you think we shall be greater fools than we are here?" The son and heir of Duke Hamilton died of consumption in his youth; when his minister visited him, he took his Bible from under his pillow and pointed to the words, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of life." "This," said he, "is my comfort now." When near death, he urged his brother with much affectionate earnestness to seek Christ and prepare for heaven, closing his appeal with these re-

markable words—"Now, Douglas, in a little time you will be *duke*, but *I shall be a king.*"

"Father, take me!" said a little afflicted girl, as she lay with her eyes upturned; her father hurried to the bed to raise her, when she gave him a sweet smile, saying, "No, I meant my *heavenly* Father, I want to rest in his arms." A gentleman once asked some Sunday scholars what they thought the inhabitants of heaven would be likely to contend for? A little girl replied, "There could be *no* contention, they would be at rest for ever." "But," said the questioner, "suppose there should be, what would it be about?" She replied, "I should think it would be *who should get nearest to Christ!*" Heaven is largely made up of little children who were as buds here, but are like full-blown flowers there. A pious little boy, whose pains prevented his bodily rest, when near his end, said, "Talk to me, mother!" "What shall I talk about?" "About heaven, mother." Yes, to think of the *heavenly rest* often soothes bodily pain. "A rest remaineth for the people of God."

APOSTOLIC SIGHS.

HORATIUS BONAR, D.D.

"I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you."—1 COR. iv. 8.

This is one of the very few passages in which the apostle gives vent to his feelings as a suffering and injured man. Through no fewer than six verses here (8—13,) there runs the utterance of a solemn sorrow,—we might almost call it melancholy,—at the contemplation of his present lot as an apostle of the Lord.

His life had many a bitterness. Danger, weariness, contempt, persecution, hunger, thirst, nakedness, buffeting, reviling, stoning, bonds;—these were its chief earthly ingredients; and had there not been something heavenly, compensating for all these, he would have been, of all men, most miserable. He felt the sorrow; for conversion had not lifted him out of the region of human feeling; yet he seldom refers to it; and when he does, it is more

with triumph than with sadness; as when he says, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us," (Rom. viii. 18.)

Here his reference to his sorrows has more in it of sadness than elsewhere. Yet he has not repented of his course; he is not ashamed of his apostleship; he is willing to drink even a bitterer cup than he has yet tasted. The sadness that thus comes is altogether natural, and shews how truly the apostle was a man; a man of like passion with ourselves. We get a passing insight into the noble soul, and learn how profoundly he felt the evils, that, like the waves of the storm, beat upon him without ceasing, and how oftentimes his heart was like to break, even in the midst of the joy unspeakable and full of glory.

He does not draw back, nor refuse to pay the cost of apostleship. He accepts the present honour and coming glory with all their conditions and penalties. For the joy set before him, he endures the shame. But he feels the agony; and oh, with what a tone of serene, yet shaded feeling, do we hear him speak these words, "I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death; for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised. Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place; and labour, working with our own hands; being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we entreat; we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day."

With some, I fear, there is more than the apostle's sorrow. They do not, perhaps, repent having taken up the cross; but they shrink sometimes from what it has brought upon them. They counted on a little, but it has come to much. They gladly took up the cross, but they had not ascertained its weight and its sharpness. They were prepared for some bitterness; but not for all this gall and wormwood.—They made ready for battle, but the fight

has proved sorer and longer than they dreamed of. They were not unwilling to bear shame for his name; but the reproach has proved heavier than they can bear.—They knew that they were to meet resistance from the world;—but not all this enmity, this malignity, this misrepresentation. They did not refuse sacrifice and suffering; but the poverty, the disappointment, and the all but broken heart, have gone beyond their calculations. The wounds are deeper, the fiery darts are sharper, the furnace is hotter, the road is rougher, the hill is higher, the stream is deeper, than they had thought.

They do not wish they had not become Christians; but they hardly know what to do, nor which way to turn. They submit, but they do not count it all joy. They have the sadness of the apostle, without his exulting gladness. His was but half a sorrow, because of the joy; their's is but half a joy, because of the sorrow. In such a case they need to be put in mind of the apostolic hope, by which the primitive Church was sustained, lest Satan should get an advantage over them, or lest they be weary and faint in their minds.

There is another class of Christians, however, of whom Paul here more especially speaks. They are the easy-minded and self-satisfied, who think themselves full and rich. They have not been emptied from vessel to vessel, and so they have settled on their lees. They are not like Laodiceans, but very near them; they are not foolish virgins, but very like them.—They would not think of following the world; but they do not like the idea of confronting and condemning it. They would rather be saved from the ill-will and scorn which separation from its vanities and gaieties is sure to produce; all the while enjoying Christianity at their firesides, and congratulating themselves on the prudence by means of which they have succeeded in avoiding the reproach, without relinquishing their profession. They would rather not expose themselves to too much shame, for over-zeal, or over-decision, or over-boldness in the cause of Christ. A little compromise with the world, they think, does no harm. A proper enjoyment of its harmless amusements, they are per-

suaded, is of great benefit to themselves, and of wonderful use in conciliating worldly men, and soothing away their prejudices. They look with no small dislike upon the out-spoken fervour of fearless single-eyed disciples, to whom Christ is everything, and the world nothing; nay, they join with the scoffer in reviling these men as excited enthusiasts; professing themselves the best of Christians all the while, and announcing that the religion they admire is unostentatious and undemonstrative, modest and retiring; nay, they grow warm in denouncing zeal for Christ, and never fail to add that these over-zealous Christians do more harm than good. Of such it is that the apostle writes these words of solemn rebuke,—“Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us.” And it is in reference to their conduct that he adds these other words of sorrowful irony,—“I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you;” I would it were what you seem to think, the time of the kingdom; I would that the day of reigning were come, that we might be delivered from these calamities; but, alas for us, that day has not yet broken, we are not in the kingdom yet, but only suffering the tribulation on the way to it.

Let us now ascertain the exact teaching of these words.

I. There is a reign for us.—We are made kings and priests unto God, in virtue of our oneness with Him who is our King and Priest as well as God's King and Priest. The Church is a royal priesthood, a noble band of Melchisedecs, each one of which can say even now, “We have received the kingdom that cannot be moved.” In unison with the host above, we sing not only, “Thou hast redeemed us by Thy blood,” but, “We shall reign on the earth.” It doth not yet appear what we shall be—for the disguise of mortality is on us—but we know that the crown of life, the crown of righteousness, is in store for us, and that, if we suffer, we shall also reign. Not safely merely. nor blessedness, nor glory, but a kingdom, a sceptre, a throne. The world's reign is now; the Church's reign is coming. Satan is now earth's prince; Christ will soon be king.

II. That reign will end our tribulation.

—There is first the suffering, and then the glory. The dawn of the glory is the dispersion of the clouds, and the stilling of the storm. For that glory comes from the presence of the glorious one; and in His presence there can be no mourning, and no darkness. It is His reign, as well as ours; and into His kingdom nothing that defileth or darkeneth shall enter. Were that era still the time of His absence, we could not be assured of its unmingled brightness; but it is the day of His presence, and that is the assurance to us of its sorrowless splendour. There shall be no night there, for the sun goes not down. There shall be no more curse, for the Blessed One is there. The winter is past; the rain is over and gone; the clouds return no more. Not the kingdom only, but the King, has come; and with Him all His saints. The last battle is over; the usurper dethroned and bound; mortality is swallowed up of life; the days of mourning are ended; the tears are wiped away. The marriage of the Lamb is come; the Bride and the Bridegroom have met; the New Jerusalem has descended; Solomon and Pharaoh's daughter are upon its throne. We shall hear no longer of a church militant and a church triumphant; no more of a “divided Christ,” or a “divided Church;” part weeping, part rejoicing; some above, some below; souls in heaven, bodies in the grave; Christ's redeemed members scattered everywhere. All this is over. Separation, distance, death, toil, weariness, sighing,—all have fled away. The year of the redeemed is come. Their reproach is ended; their reigning is begun.

III. We are to look and long for that reign.—When the apostle says, “I would to God that ye did reign, that we also might reign with you,” he meant to say, “Oh that that day were come which ye seem to think has arrived already; then should we and you rejoice and triumph together.” He saw nothing on this side of that reign but reproach and tribulation. Streaks of sunlight there might be, but not the day. Hours of rest might relieve the lifetime's weariness, but “the rest that remaineth” was awaiting the arrival of the King.

In prosperous days the Church has forgotten these things; becoming contented

with the imperfect and the mortal; ceasing to sigh for the incorruptible and the undefiled. Hence she cannot be trusted with ease. This has always been to her a peril and a snare. In gracious wisdom God has made her path rough and her cup bitter; that she may not take her ease, nor tarry by the way; but set her affection on things above.

In telling us of the kingdom, God meant us to think much of it, to desire it, to count all earth a shadow when compared to it. Our eyes are to be upward, eastward, watching for the day. Our "heart's desire and prayer" is to be for the hastening of the kingdom. For the Church's sake, as well as for our own, we are to plead for its arrival. This is our hope; and there is none like it! These are our prospects, and what is there here that can come between them and us? It is not sentimentalism, nor fanaticism, nor fancy, to desire the kingdom. It is simple faith; that faith which is the substance of things hoped for. Love, too, constrains us to these longings. Yes, love; love to the king compels us; for while the expectations of glory to ourselves is no mean nor feeble motive; yet, above and beyond this, there is personal attachments to the Lord himself;—true-hearted loyalty which quickens within us the vehement longing that He should be glorified!

HOW TO BE EDIFIED WITH PREACHING.

On one occasion, a friend made a remark that impressed me deeply, I hope abidingly.

We attended the ministry of his beloved friend H——, and on one occasion, advertent to certain criticisms that had been heard on his discourses by some who seemed to sit in judgment on their teacher,—I asked him, "How is it, that while they call one of his sermons fine, and another dry, and so forth, I find them all so profitable, and always come away well fed!" With animated quickness, he replied, "I'll tell you how it is,—you pray for him!" "Indeed, I do, and that he may be taught to teach me!" "Aye, there it is, and your prayer is answered."

Now, mark me, the preacher and the

flock either feed or starve one another: what they withhold from him in prayer, they lose in doctrine. Those who merely listen to cavil or admire, come away empty of spiritual food.

Those who give liberally to their minister, in secret prayer for him, have their souls made fat by the very same doctrine that falls unblest upon others. He added, "Bear dear H—— more and more upon your heart before your Father's throne, and you will feast more largely upon the banquet that he spreads."

I have to be thankful that my friend's counsel was not lost on me. From that shepherd, indeed, I was soon removed, and very soon after he followed D—— to glory: but I had already carried the lesson into another pasture, where, richly and abundantly as we are fed, mine always appears a Benjamin's mess: for I had learned the secret of the profitable barter, which I would commend to every Christian hearer—*instant, affectionate, individual intercession for the teacher*, in the spirit of faith; then may we sit contented, and humbly confident to receive the assured answer in the portion which he is commissioned to divide.

TEMPTATION.

Such is the nature of temptation, that unless it is instantly and constantly resisted, injury will result to us in our moral or physical nature. To tamper with sin is to fall. It will not do to say, only this one time will I step aside from the right way; if we do, the inclination to repeat the same wrong is two-fold greater than before. Hence we must resist the first solicitations to sin with our best endeavours, and say with resolute decision. 'Get thee behind me, Satan.' For the first yielding to sin is generally the leader to other sins. The first oath to the swearer, the first drink to the drunkard, the first theft to the thief, and precisely as the first giving way to a temptation to do any other wrong. Sin grows, and it is of wonderfully quick growth; the poisonous inhalation from it soon contaminating and destroying others. Sin, like misery, loves company, and such as have been lured into sin, soon lead others away from the path of virtue.

DO WHAT YOU CAN.

BY THE REV. J. C. RYLE.

"She hath done what she could."—Mark xiv. 8.

The text which heads this paper deserves attentive consideration. It contains words which were spoken by the Lord Jesus Christ in praise of a woman. Her name we are not told: this single action is all that we know about her. But she was praised by Christ. Blessed indeed are those whom the Lord commendeth.

The circumstances of the history are few and simple. Our Lord was sitting in the house of Simon the leper, at Bethany, "two days" before his crucifixion. The end of his work was drawing near; and he knew it. The cross and the grave were in sight; and he saw them. "As he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head. And there were some that had indignation within themselves." They found fault with the woman's action. They said it was "waste." They murmured against her. But here at once the Great Head of the Church interposed. He declared that the woman had done a good work. She had seized the last occasion she had of doing honour to her master. She had used the only means she had of testifying her affection. And then he placed on her conduct the seal of his approbation in these solemn words—"She hath done what she could."

Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." Such was the occasion when these words were spoken. Now what are the lessons which they are meant to teach us? There are two which appear to me to stand out prominently on the face of the sentence, two mighty principles which ought never to be forgotten. Let me try to show what they are.

I. We learn, for one thing, that the Lord Jesus likes his people to be *doing Christians*. He commends the action of the woman before him. Others sat by in idle admiration, but never lifted a finger to do honour to their Messiah. It was

very different with this woman. She "did" something. She did "what she could." Hence the praises bestowed on her. The Great Head of the Church likes "*doing*" Christians.

What do I mean by "*doing*" Christians? I mean Christians who show their Christianity in their lives—by deeds, by actions, by practice, by performance.— True religion is not made up of general notions and abstract opinions—of certain views, and doctrines, and feelings and sentiments. Useful as these things are, they are not everything. You must not rest content with them. You must see that they produce a certain line of conduct in daily life. It matters little what a man thinks, and feels, and wishes in religion, if he never gets further than thinking, and feeling, and wishing. The great question is, What fruit does the man bring forth? What does he do? How does he live?

"*Doing*" is the only satisfactory proof that a man is a living member of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that his faith is the faith of God's elect. True faith is not like the faith of devils, who believe and tremble, but neither love nor obey. True faith will never be found alone, though it alone justifies. When there is faith, there will always be love, and obedience, and an earnest desire to do God's will. Living members of Christ, will always show something of their Master's mind. Weak as they may be, they love to follow his example whose whole life was action. It may be little that they are able to do, but that little they will try to do. We may be very sure there is no grace where there is no "*doing*."

"*Doing*" is the only satisfactory proof that your Christianity is a real work of the Spirit. Talking and profession are cheap and easy things. They cost nothing. They are soon picked up, soon learned, soon forgotten, and soon laid aside. But "*doing*" requires trouble and self-denial. It looks like "*business*," and makes the world believe that religion is a reality. I care little to hear that a man likes sermons, and always goes to hear, and thinks sermons very good and very fine. I have lived long enough not to be satisfied with this. It is only blossoms; is it not fruit. I want to know what the

man does. What does he do in private? What does he do in his family? What does he do on week-days? Is his religion anything better than a Sunday coat—a thing put on every Sunday morning, and put off every Sunday night? If there is no “DOING” in a man’s religion, it is not of the right sort. It has not got the true stamp on it. Like bad silver and gold, or plated articles, it has not got the goldsmith’s mark on it. It is worth little now; it will bring no peace on a death-bed; it will not pass the gate of heaven.

“Doing” is the only evidence that will avail a man on the day of judgment. Let any one note the conclusion of the 25th chapter of St. Matthew, and he will see what I mean. Your works will be the witnesses by which your faith will be tried. The question will not be, “What church did you attend? and what profession did you make? and what experience have you had? and what did you wish to be?” The only question will be, What FRUITS did your faith produce? “Faith,” says James, “if it hath not works, is dead, being alone” (James ii. 17).

Your works cannot justify you, my dear reader. They cannot save. They cannot put away our sin. Christ’s work alone can do that. But there never was a justified man who did not do works—at any rate, some. Your works do not go before you into heaven, nor yet alongside of you. The souls that get there see none of their works. They only see Jesus Christ’s precious blood and all-prevailing intercession. But your works are to “follow” you, if you are to go to heaven, in order to speak to your character. “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them” (Rev. xiv. 13). Never was there a greater mistake than to suppose that works are of no consequence because they cannot justify and cannot save. The supposition shows gross ignorance, and it is a sad perversion of Scripture.

Are true Christians *God’s workmanship*—are they new creatures? Yes! The Spirit made them what they are. But mark what St. Paul tells the Ephesians (ii. 10). “We are his workmanship, cre-

ated in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

Are true Christians a *peculiar people*? Yes! God has chosen them out of the world, and called them to be his. But wherefore? St. Paul tells Titus “that they may be zealous of good works—careful to maintain good works” (Titus ii. 14; iii. 8).

Remember this, dear reader. Let no man deceive you with vain words. Let none persuade you that “doing” is not an important part of Christianity. It is an old saying, “Handsome is that handsome does.” I mend it. I say, “Christian is that Christian does.” Would you be a happy Christian, and enjoy great comfort? would you be useful and a benefit to others? I trust many would like this. Then store up my advice to-day. Be a good Christian. “Be doers of the word and not hearers only” (James i. 22).

II. We learn, for another thing, from this woman’s history, that *all true Christians can do something*, and that all should do what they can. What do I mean by “doing something?” I mean doing something for God’s glory—something for Christ’s cause—something for the souls of others—something to spread true religion—something to oppose the march of sin and the devil—something to enlighten the darkness around us—something to improve and amend the world. Something or other, I say, every true Christian can do, and what he can do he ought to do.

Now I know well the devil labours to make true Christians do nothing. Doing Christians are the devil’s greatest enemies. Doing Christians pull down his work, and weaken his hands. He will try hard to prevent you being a man of this character. I warn every one who has reason to hope that he is a true Christian to remember this, and to be on his guard. Listen not to the reasons which Satan puts into your heads. Satan was a liar from the beginning, and you must not let his lies prevent you doing good. Stand on your guard, and be not deceived.

Satan will tell some that they are *too young* to do anything. Believe him not: that is a lie. The greatest men in the

world and Church began to work, and were great, at a very early age. Alexander the Great conquered the world before he was thirty. Pitt was prime minister of England before he was twenty-five. It is never too soon to begin working for Christ. Yet a little while, and the enemy will say, "You are too old, and it is too late."

Satan will tell others that they *stand alone too much* to do any good. Believe him not: that is another lie. There never was a change for good or evil in the world's history which may not be traced up to one man. Martin Luther, Mahomet, Napoleon—all are cases in point. They all rose from the ranks. They stood alone at first. They owed nothing to position or patronage. Yet see what they did! Away with the idea that numbers alone have power! It is minorities, and not majorities, that shake the world. Think of the little flock of Christ left behind him. Think of 120 believers in the upper chambers in Jerusalem, and remember what they did to the nations. And then learn what wonderful things a few resolute hearts can do.

Satan will tell others that they have no *power* to do anything. He will say, "You have no gifts, no talents, no influence.—You had better sit still." Believe him not: this also is a lie. Everybody has a certain degree of influence and weight on earth. Some have a ton weight, some a hundred weight, some a pound, some an ounce, some only a grain; but all have some. Everybody is continually helping forward the cause of God or the cause of the devil. Every morning you rise from your bed you go forth to gather with Christ or to scatter. Every night you lie down in that bed you have either been building the walls of Zion or helping to pull them down. There are but two parties and sides in the world—the side of God and the side of the devil—the side of good and the side of evil. No man, woman, or child can ever be neutral, and live to themselves; one of the two sides they are always helping, whether they will or no. Grant that your gifts and powers are but a grain of sand; will you not throw that grain into the scale of God's cause? It is the last grain that turns the scale, and the last pound that breaks the horse's back.

Grant that you have only one talent; see to it that your one talent is laid out as heartily for God as if you had a hundred. Ah, reader! it is not gifts that are necessary for doing good, but *will*. It is often the "one-talent" people that are the most slow to move.

But Satan will tell some that they have *no opportunities* for doing anything—no door open on any side. Once more I say, Believe him not; this also is a great lie. Never believe that you have no opportunity of doing good, till you are cast on a desert island, and cut off from the face of mankind; never till you are the last man in the world, never till then believe that there is no opening for doing good.

Do you ask me what you can do? I reply, There is something for every true Christian to do. The least and lowest, the weakest, and feeblest child of God is surrounded by people to whom he may do good. Have you not got relatives and connections, husband or wife, or parents, or children, brothers or sisters? Have you not got friends, or companions, or fellow-servants? Have you not got masters or mistresses, or labourers, or servants? Who in the world, almost, could say, No! to this question? who but must say, Yes! If you say, Yes! then behold your opportunities of doing good. Harm or good you must do to all about you: you cannot help it. See to it that you do good.

Have you not got a *tongue* to speak with? Might you not often speak a word of counsel? Might you not encourage the wavering, quicken the slothful, recall the backslider, check the profligate, reprove the worldly, advise the weak? Might you not often put in a word for God and Christ, and show your colours? Who can tell the power of "a word spoken in season?" It has often been the salvation of a soul.

Have you not the power of doing good by *your life*? You may work wonders by steady consistency and patient continuance in well doing. You may make people think by exercising graces before them when they stop their ears against good counsel, and cannot be reclaimed by the tongue. Patience and meekness, brotherly

kindness and charity, a forbearing and forgiving spirit, a gentle, unselfish, and considerate temper—all these have often a mighty effect in the long run. Like the constant dropping of water, they can wear away prejudices. Thousands can understand them, who cannot understand doctrine. There is such a thing as "winning without the word." (1 Peter iii. 1).

I speak of things within the reach of all who have the will to do something for God. I might say more. I might speak of the good that might be done everywhere by trying to teach the ignorant. I might speak of help that might be given to charitable and religious societies, merely by making them known. Thousands of pounds might be got for home and abroad, if only men who cannot give themselves would ask others to give.

But I forbear. I have said enough to give food for thinking. Let a man once have the will to do good, and he will soon find the way. He will find that good can be done.

A true Christian should desire to leave the world when he dies, a better world than it was when he was born, and give his mite to improve it, whether in money, talents or time. Let every one on earth who hopes he is a true Christian remember this. Let every man wake up, rub his eyes, look round him, and see if he cannot do something. Let no one say I can do nothing, unless he has tried. Let no one say he has tried, and it is no use, because he has not done everything that he wanted. There is much pride and mortified vanity in that thought. Let no one fancy he is doing no good, because he sees no immediate fruit from it. God's time is often not our time. Duties are ours and results are God's. But something let every true man of God try to do.

Set the Lord Jesus Christ before you, reader; and go forward in his footsteps, looking unto him. Let him be your strength, and let him be your example. "He went about doing good." Go and do like him. You may be able to do very little: but DO WHAT YOU CAN.

"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."—Gal. vi. 7.

CHRISTIAN UNITY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SELF-MADE MEN."

Previous to the apostacy of which Satan was the leader, the moral universe was characterised by the strictest unity. The various orders of spiritual beings were bound by the filial tie of affection to one Parent, and were subject to one governing Head. The throne of God was the great centre, from which they hastened to execute their several commissions, and to which they again sped with their respective offerings. The immediate effect of sin was the dissolution of this unity. But the avowed design of the Gospel is the re-establishment of union in our department of the moral creation. The Church of Christ is one, even as the human race is one; and the days roll rapidly on when the grand text shall be repeated throughout all lands—"There is neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Were practical effect given to Christianity, it would emparadise the world. Listen to the angelic song—"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Independents, Methodists, and Baptists may indulge in fierce contentions, but Christianity breathes universal benevolence—"Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."

All true believers are distinguished by identity of spiritual life. Man is capable of three kinds of life—spiritual, natural, and intellectual. The second and the third are common to all; the first is peculiar to Christians. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Now, in this highest species of life, there is absolute, indivisible, and indisputable unity. In the countless arms and twigs of a large and umbrageous tree, or in the various members of the human body, there is but a single vital principle at work—but one living cur-

rent flowing and returning in a beautiful and complex system of ducts and channels. Hence it is said, with instructive and designed significancy, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." "Ye are the body of Christ." Thus believers are animated, not merely by the same *kind* of life, but by the same *life*. They furnish an example, not of resemblance only, but of identity. This life will outlive death, and remain incorruptible amid the corruptions of the grave. An eminent painter once said, when bringing all the skill of his art to bear upon a picture, "I paint for posterity." Christians can adopt this higher tone—"We live for eternity."

All true believers resemble each other in moral character. The manifestations of the Divine life are as uniform as those from which we infer natural or intellectual life. Hence we conclude that all who have the life of God must resemble each other in moral principles. They are in common, purified from the "lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life." By the Spirit they are "all sealed unto the day of redemption" with the same seal; and the impression which it leaves is the "image of God." As "fellow-citizens," they are children of the same soil, subject to the same laws, comprehended in the same institutions, speak the same language, and love the same objects. Without exception, the same principles are seated in their hearts, the same views regulate and control their lives, and the same virtues and graces adorn their characters. In each section of the visible Church, and in each of the varied races of the human family, it will be found that all believers, when compared with each other, are pervaded by one class of moral principles, marked by one character, and illustrate the most perfect unity.

There is far more of Christian unity among those who hold the principles of the Reformation than there was at the beginning of the present century; and were all the prejudices and misleading partialities which arise out of the state of the conscience and of the heart, removed, a very near approximation would be made to agreement in doctrinal belief. As it is, we are all one about the great fundamentals. If you ask the teachers of Christi-

anity the way to God and heaven, all will at once answer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

The greatest impediments to Christian unity arise out of sheer misunderstanding. That man was a philosopher who prefaced every debate with—"Gentlemen, define your terms." During the Peninsular war, an officer of artillery had just served a gun with admirable precision against a body of men in a wood to his left. The duke rode up, and after turning his glass for a moment in the direction of the shot, said, in his own cool way, "Well aimed, captain but nothing more; they are our own 39th!" That was a sad mistake. But alas! too often, on purpose, have the armies of Jesus turned the great guns of the Church, which might have battered down citadels of Satan, against Christian brethren. On the field of battle the English, Irish, and the Scottish branches of the army concentrate all their energies in the vindication of the throne under whose shadow they are happy, and fight for that flag which has waved for a thousand years over the field of victory. Why should it not be so among Christians? The forces of darkness are marshalling—why should not the armies of light converge? "How long shall Ephraim envy Judah, and Judah vex Ephraim?"

All true believers are one in spiritual privilege. In many respects Christians differ from each other. One rolls along in a chariot of ease, and another treads with naked feet the world's highway. The saints are also of every variety of the human race, and of every complexion. There is the white European, the Red Man of the West, the sable aborigines of Africa, and the delicate Asiatic. Yet these differences are utterly lost sight of, when we reflect on the things in which they agree. They are all equally subjects of Divine grace. They all agree in loving the one glorious Saviour—are all alike free to the same Cross, and welcome to the same throne of grace. They are all washed in the same fountain—sanctified by the same Spirit, and heirs of the same eternal glory. Any apparent differences which exist are only as long lived as the journey on which they are: differences of all kinds will end when they reach the same heaven.

All true believers shall dwell together for ever with Christ. Grace gathers the people of God into one Church below, and glory gathers them to one bright home above. Luther and Calvin, Whitfield and Wesley, have long since celebrated the funeral of their differences. Let their followers learn to be charitable, and while holding firmly their own principles, pause, before rashly condemning a fellow-Christian, because the husbandry of his soul displays results which the culture of their souls has not reared or ripened.

THE LAND OF BEULAH.

"Were I to adopt the figurative language of Bunyan, I might date this letter from the land of Beulah, of which I have been for some weeks a happy inhabitant. The celestial city is full in my view. Its glories beam upon me, its breezes fan me, its odours are wafted to me, its sounds strike upon my ears, and its spirit is breathed into my heart. Nothing separates me from it but the river of death, which now appears as but an insignificant rill, that may be crossed at a single step, whenever God shall give permission.

"The Sun of Righteousness has been gradually drawing nearer and nearer, appearing larger and brighter as He approached, and now He fills the whole hemisphere, pouring forth a flood of glory, in which I seem to float like an insect in the beams of the sun, exulting, yet almost trembling, while I gaze on this excessive brightness; and wondering, with unutterable wonder, why God should deign to shine thus upon a sinful worm. A single heart and a single tongue seem altogether inadequate to my wants. I want a whole heart for every separate emotion, and a whole tongue to express that emotion.

"O, my sister, could you know what awaits the Christian, could you know even so much as I know, you could not refrain from rejoicing, and even leaping for joy. Labours, trials, troubles, would be nothing. You would rejoice in trials, and glory in tribulations, and, like Paul and Silas, sing God's praises in the darkest night and in the deepest danger.

"You have known a little of my trials and conflicts, and that they have neither

been few nor small; and I hope this glorious termination of them will serve to strengthen your faith and elevate your hope. Hold on your Christian course but a few days longer, and you will meet in heaven your happy and affectionate brother.—EDWARD PAYSON.

"PORTLAND, U. S., 1827."

HYMN TO THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Come, Thou Spirit, ever-living,
Come, true God, in all Thy power;
Not in vain Thy graces giving,
Fill us with them evermore;
So in our dark hearts shall shine
Spirit, light, and life divine.

Breathe into our hearts and senses
Wisdom, counsel, pure desires;
And before our work commences,
Show us what Thy will requires;
Make our knowledge sound, that we
Be from taint of error free.

In the path of safety lead us,
Which Thy Word to us hath shown,
Let no obstacle impede us,
Clear away each stumbling stone;
After every known offence,
Work in us true penitence.

Let our hearts with joy and gladness
Feel we are the sons of God,
And when troubles cause us sadness,
Let us meekly kiss the rod;
Knowing for our good is sent
Our kind Father's chastisement.

Stir us up with childlike boldness
To unfold to Him our need,
Melt to tears and sighs our coldness,
Plead for us, and intercede;
Granted thus be our request,
And our confidence increased!

Should we yet for consolation,
Sometimes pine, by anguish wrung,
And cry out in tribulation,
Ah! my God, my God, how long?
End our griefs, or, what is best—
Give us courage, patience, rest.

Thou from whom all good proceedeth,
Spirit of all power and might,
Give the strength our warfare needeth,
Arm us for the deadly fight;
Grant that we at length through Thee
May be crowned with victory.

To our faith give firm endurance,
Let not Satan, death, or sneer,
Rob us of the sweet assurance,
Thou our God and shield art near:
Which, although the flesh deny,
Thy sure Word doth testify.

And should we at last be dying,
Make us doubly sure of this,
That in Jesus' bosom lying,
We shall taste of joy and bliss,
Which no human tongue can tell,
Passing thought, unspeakable!

J. NEANDER, 1769.

PREPARED FOR THE WORST.

I am prepared for the worst, said a young man, as he went off on a journey, with his great-coat, wrapper, and umbrella. And in the sense in which he used the words, he was, as he only referred to a little cold or rain. But the words may be taken in a much more important sense, and even then there are some who can say, "I am prepared for the worst." What is the worst? and what is it to be prepared for the worst? These are very important, interesting, and solemn questions. Let us look at them for a few moments.

DEATH! Is that the worst? So perhaps some would think. It is the most solemn event that can happen to us in this world. It has been called "the king of terrors," and "of all terrible things" it has been said to be "the most terrible." Well, death, in one view of it, is a bad thing. It is the enemy of our nature. We cannot love it. It makes wives widows, children fatherless, and affectionate husbands unhappy. It has caused floods of tears to flow, and human nature to shudder. But it is *most* terrible to *ITS* VICTIM. It terminates his mortal course. It ends his existence in the present state. It introduces him to an unseen world, to an unknown state of existence. It terminates his plans, schemes, and pleasures, and puts his purposes and pretensions to the test. It is very solemn. Are we prepared for it? Except our sins are pardoned, our natures are renewed, and our souls are reconciled to God, we cannot be. Sin is the sting of death. It gives it power to injure us, to wound us, to destroy our brightest hopes. If it reign in us, it will ruin us. If death find us in an unpardoned state, it will be dreadful. But if, through faith in Jesus, our sins are all forgiven us,—if, by the operation of the Holy Spirit, the stony heart has been taken away, and the heart of flesh given,—if we are reconciled to God by the death of his Son, and are at peace with him,—we are prepared for death. It may seize, but it cannot hold us; it may lay the body in the grave, but it cannot touch the soul. Its very nature is changed to us, and instead of injuring, it only lays the body to sleep in the grave, and introduces the soul to God in glory.

JUDGMENT! Is standing before the judgment-seat the worst? So some would say. And it is enough to awaken the most serious thoughts, and arouse ten thousand fears. To appear before divine justice, represented by the Son of God, whose eyes are as a flame of fire, to give an account of our conduct, or rather misconduct, for twenty, or forty, or sixty years,—how solemn! how fearful this! To account for sins against the best of beings, against the plainest precepts, for so many years, and to feel that we have not the least excuse to offer for our conduct! He never provoked us by his conduct towards us, or injured us in his dealings with us. We sinned just because we would sin, and we persevered in sin because we perversely preferred doing so, to obeying his wise and holy precepts. He has commanded us to prepare to give an account in his word, he apprehends by his officer Death, and he will summon us to appear before his bar by the sound of the Archangel's trumpet. Are we prepared for this? We may be, *but are we?* If so, we have embraced the Saviour, and are justified through his finished work. We have sought and received the Holy Spirit, and are sanctified by his power, grace, and indwelling. We have come to the Father through the Son, and he has blotted out all our sins in his precious blood. But is this the case? If we have only one sin to answer for, we are undone! We might have obtained a pardon,—we were promised one, if we applied for it while Jesus was on the throne of grace; but we neglected or refused, and now the door of hope is shut, the throne of grace is vacated, and mercy has given place to justice. That we have one sin laid to our charge, to be accounted for by ourselves, is wholly and entirely our own fault. God was ready to pardon. Jesus was exalted to give repentance and remission of sins. We were assured again and again, that by him all that believe are justified from all things. But if we would not go unto him that we might have life,—if we refused to receive the pardon presented, or to seek the reconciliation promised, who is to blame? We might have been pardoned; but we would not stoop to accept it. We might have been justified from all things, in the finished work of the Lord Jesus, but

we would not embrace that work; and now our pride and self-sufficiency have brought us low. If one sin is charged upon us, it is because Christ Jesus has been rejected by us.

HELL! This is the worst. Nothing can be compared to hell. What is it but the wrath of God endured, the endless lashings of a guilty conscience experienced, the desert of sin inflicted upon the sinner? In hell, black despair reigns, remorse is eternally felt, and pain and agony must be eternally endured. In hell, justice appears in all its terrible majesty, mercy is for ever excluded, and sinners are left to torment themselves, and to be tormented by Satan and his angels without end. Reader! are you prepared for this? Can thine heart endure, and can thy hand be strong, in the day that God shall deal with thee? *Will you go to hell?* This question is proposed to you every time you hear the gospel. *Will you go to hell?* This question I most solemnly ask you now. You need not, for there is a way of escape. You need not, for God is good, and ready to forgive. You need not, for the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. You need not, for the Spirit and the Bridesay, "Come, and take of the fountain of the water of life freely." But if you refuse to come, I protest unto you that you shall surely perish. If you reject the Saviour, I ask you in his own words, "How SHALL YOU ESCAPE THE DAMNATION OF HELL?" Are you prepared to linger eternally in endless pains? Are you prepared to dwell with devouring fire, to languish in everlasting burnings? *Are you?* Can you be? Let me beseech you with all earnestness, with all tenderness, to lay these things to heart. Flee, flee at once to Jesus. Receive him into your heart by faith. Renounce all your refuges of lies, give up yourself to him, and spend your remaining days for Him; so will you be prepared for the worst. Yes, then you may look through time and all its changes, and into eternity with all its solemnities, and sing,—

"Now let the wildest storms arise,
Let tempests mingle earth and skies;
I'm safe in Christ, the ark of grace,
And soon shall see him face to face.

Death will to me be life and peace,
A rest from sin, a sweet release;
For I through Jesu's precious blood
Shall rise from death, to live with God."

Late Rev. James Smith.

JESUS IN COMPANY WITH HIS DISCIPLES.

We are aware by how many different ways our fellow disciples try us, and grieve us; and, no doubt, we grieve them. We see, or fancy we see, some bad quality in them, and find it hard to bear it, or to go on in further company with them. It has occurred to me that we may observe, that just in those same ways the mind and heart of Jesus were tried and grieved by his disciples in the days of His flesh, and yet He went on with them, we know, as I need not add, "*not overcome of evil, but overcoming evil with good,*"—the evil that was in them, with the good that was in Himself. I would mention some of these wrong things in them that must have grieved Him, and the influence of which, upon our own thoughts and feelings towards others, we will understand and continually experience.

Vanity in another tries us—an air of self-satisfaction, or the esteeming of ourselves, and the putting of ourselves forth to admiration. The Lord was tried by this spirit in His disciples. His mother betrayed it, and His kinsfolk, (John ii., vii.) Peter was thus self-confident, when he said, "Though all should be offended, yet he would not." And all of them were guilty of this, when they contended who should be the greatest; and also when they *forbade* those who followed not with themselves.

Ill-temper is a very fretful thing; it so interferes with us. Martha tried the Lord with it, when she complained to Him of her sister; and so did the apostles when they urged Him to send away the multitude, just because their privacy and repast had been intruded upon, (Mark vi.) Any show of a *covetous*, grudging spirit is very hateful to us. Jesus must have discerned this, (and therefore have had to bear with it,) on such occasions as Matt. xiv. 17; xv. 33.

Unkindness, whether towards ourselves

or to others, is very irritating. Peter's inquiry in Matt. xviii. 21, covered, I believe, what the Lord must have seen to be the workings of an unkind and malevolent temper; as also we see it in Matt. xv. 23.

Indifference to others, and carefulness about oneself, is very vexing to us also—it is so selfish and cold-hearted. Jesus was tried by enough of it in His disciples. He asked them to watch with Him, but He found them sleeping; He spake of His death, but they were thinking of their place and honours in the kingdom; He spake of leaving them, but none of them asked, "Whither goest thou?" and in the ship it was of their *own* safety they thought. These were instances of cold indifference.

Ignorance is apt to try us, and make us impatient. Whoever found more of it in those He was continually teaching than the Lord? Some of the plainest lessons they had not learned; and when He spake *spiritually* or *mystically* to them, they listened to Him as *in the letter*—they were asking explications of the simplest parables.

Unspirituality of mind in fellow-disciples is a trial to us. How much of this amongst His people was the Lord continually suffering! and He was always light in discovering it. We often, through vanity or self esteem, mistake mere nonconformity with ourselves for it.

These are among the ways in which the disciples must have tried the mind of their Divine Master; and these are some of the tempers and characteristics which to this hour try and fret us in our brethren. It may be thought that the instances here adduced are but faint and minute expressions of these different wrong tempers. That may be. But we must remember how pure and perfect the mind of Jesus is, and then we shall know, that though the instance was faint, and the occasion a small one, yet *His finer sensibility gave it more than the importance of the greatest occasion.*

And comforting, let me say it is, to see the Lord going before us in such trials as these. But if He have gone before us in the *trials themselves*. He has also left us an example of a *series of victories* over them, and in these victories He has told us to "follow His steps;" for not only in His ways with His *adversaries*, but in His

ways with his *disciples*, is He our pattern. If, in not answering reviling with reviling, nor wrong with threatenings, He is an example to us, so also in His *going* on still with His disciples, in spite of naughty outbreaks and many shortcomings among them. For we have returned to Him as "the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls," in all things as the One who is a pattern to us—how we should carry ourselves to all, adversaries or brethren, (1 Pet. ii. 21-25.) And He, as I said, was never overcome of evil that was in another, but ever overcome it by the good that was in Himself, (Rom. xii. 21.)

Thus did he suffer from His disciples, and thus did he conquer. How ready are our selfish hearts to plead our right to part company, if another do not please us. But this was not Jesus. The pride, the indifference, the ill-temper, and the low unspiritual mind, which the disciples were continually betraying, did not tempt Him to take distance from them.

For at the end of their walk together, He is *nearer to them than ever*, (John xiv, xvi.) He did not *part company* with them because they gave Him much exercise of heart, and were continually drawing upon Him. He warned and instructed them; He rebuked and condemned them; but *never gave them up*. Blessed, perfect Master! lover of our souls at all cost! (1 John ii. 6.)

WISHING AND WAITING.

O for a power that could express
My Saviour's boundless love!
His perfect grace and tenderness,
His care, all thought above!
Alas! my words are all too weak,
When of that sweetest name I speak.

Dear Lord, Thou from eternal days
Hast had the praise of Heaven,
Yet when my faltering voice I raise,
Thine ear in grace is given,
In broken strains, in accents weak,
Thou hearest what the heart would speak.

My Saviour, let me reach my home,
Thy beauty there to see!
Thou knowest how I long to come
Where I may dwell with Thee.
Distressed no more—no longer weak,
In raptures there Thy praise I'll speak!

A REMINISCENCE OF MY PRISON LIFE.

BY MANUEL MATAMOROS.

In the first months of the third year of my imprisonment, my health was much enfeebled. I was often scarcely able to take a few steps in my chamber. I felt, and my friends agreed with me, that the time of my earthly removal was not far off, and I rejoiced in the hope that I would be in the presence of my Saviour. The governor of the prison, impressed, without doubt, with the seriousness of my illness, offered me, in the name of his chief, the choice of a man among the prisoners who might perform for me the duties of a servant.

I accepted the proposal. "Very well," he said, "and who will you have?"

"Send me," I answered, "the worst; criminal of all."

There was in prison a young man of twenty-eight, against whom there had been a number of charges, for only two of which he had been condemned to thirty-five years of penal servitude. He had been a chief of brigands. He was a man of savage energy and of intrepid courage, who had many a time fought with the police agents sent to capture him, and in every such combat forced them to retreat. Such he had been, and was still, even in prison. Every one suspected him—his fellow-prisoners, who had often felt the effects of his brutal force, as well as the jailers. Such was the man given me for my servant. The governor was evidently well pleased to see him separated from the others.

Though such was the case I received him with joy, and felt myself moved with much compassion for him when I knew his history, as it was told me by the jailer. On his part, he undertook the service with pleasure, for near me his position was much improved in every respect. He enjoyed more liberty, and he had the privilege of receiving his old father from time to time in my cell; he had been before permitted to see him only at a distance, and in the presence of the jailers. By degrees the respect which the unfortunate man had for me changed into a lively affection. Often he has said to my mother, "Ah! madam, if the shutting up of the jailers in this dungeon would have set your son at liberty I would have done it long ago, as I easily could." And I am sure he would have tried it, dangerous as it was, if I had not turned him from it. When I knew better his character and his thoughts, I was convinced that, notwithstanding his depraved and criminal life, he had still a heart susceptible of noble and generous sentiment. One day he

said, "If I had not met with vile friends, I would never have taken to robbery; but, pushed on by some cowardly fellows who did not dare to try it themselves alone, and once drawn into it in this way, robbery soon became a habit of my life. But," added he, with a look of satisfaction, "I never took anything from the poor, and I never, either with my gun or my poignard, drew a drop of blood. I was a brigand without doubt, but a brigand who could boast of being always honourable." Poor unfortunate.

Certain details of his history were unknown to anybody. I was the only person to whom he communicated them, for had they been known, he certainly would not have escaped capital punishment. Thus I arrived by degrees at a knowledge of his deeper feelings.

One day, at the moment when I was beginning my morning worship, he was preparing to quit my cell. I induced him to remain; and he sat down beside me. I opened the Bible at the third chapter of St. John's Gospel. During the reading of it his face brightened up with a happiness that increased every moment. When I came to the 16th, 17th, and 18th verses, I read slowly and with emphasis; a deep emotion seemed to agitate him. I seized my opportunity, and read further the eighth chapter of the epistle to the Romans. We fell upon our knees, and it was given me to pray with much fervour and confidence for the man who had already inspired me with so much affection. When we rose, the tears were pouring down my companion's face. I knew not if, in my whole life, I have ever had a happier moment than this in which I saw this soul entering on the path of life eternal. I left him under the sweet impression, and later I asked him only, "What he thought of this that we had read together—this that God had spoken to us?"

"Ah! Don Manuel," he answered, "if I had known how to read, I would have learned to understand all about these things, and I never would have been a criminal! It is very beautiful. I shall never forget it. Ah! if I only knew how to read, I would not be so unfortunate."

"Well, do you wish me to teach you? Do you want to begin now?" I asked.

"Yes, yes," he said, with an expression of the most lively joy, and with an energy which characterized him. "Oh, yes—you are truly a father to me. Oh, may God reward you!"

"Very well," I said, "your application will test the sincerity of your desire."

I gave him money to buy a primer, and the same day he had his book in his pocket. We began at once, and from that moment he took every opportunity of advancing in his study, taking advantage of the help of those

prisoners who knew how to read. He employed in this way most of the day. His progress was rapid, and, at the end of a month and a half, he read tolerably. He continued to listen to the reading of the word of God every morning. He assisted, with a clearly indicated joy, in many of the religious and brotherly meetings which took place in my prison during my captivity. His peace gradually became most complete. He troubled himself no more about devising means of escape, for he was in a state of entire submission to the will of God.

Often I saw him reading, with his companions, portions of the New Testament. He distributed also the tracts which I had in my possession; and I am sure that his prudent and firm conduct at this time did much good. I was rigorously prevented from speaking with the other prisoners; but he felt himself happy when he could act as a means of communication between them and me, bringing to them a word of consolation, or some religious book which he would hand to them, saying, "Take this, see what Don Manuel has sent you in the name of the Lord."

Thus he made every day progress in the way of life eternal. The increasing peace which his soul enjoyed was written on his countenance.

When asked, "How can you bear the idea of passing thirty-five years in the galleys?"

"Oh, sir," my poor friend answered, "what is thirty-five years in the galleys to a man who had been condemned to an eternity of misery? Before I knew Don Manuel, I only thought of planning my escape, even though it had cost the sacrifice of life. I was in despair; but everything is now changed; I know that Jesus Christ came to save sinners; that by his merits my sins are all pardoned; that my past life can never be a means of condemnation against me, because Jesus is my intercessor. Therefore I shall go to the galleys tranquil and happy, for I am assured of the salvation that Jesus has purchased for me, and I rejoice that he has called me to quit this wretched career."

The moment finally arrived when my poor companion was obliged to leave the prison for the galleys. He shed abundant tears on parting with me. He was however able to say:—

"I regret much leaving you, but let us be consoled with the thought that Jesus does not forsake us, and that the love of God to us is unchangeable. We shall meet again in his presence; is it not so?"

"Yes," I answered him, "let us be faithful unto death, and we shall wear the crown of life."

Here is a friend whom the Lord gave me in my confinement, one of the consolations that he vouchsafed me. The remembrance of this man, who was only a vile criminal when he entered my prison, is now to me dear and precious. Oh! how touching this manifestation of the great love of God towards sinners. Of every soul where still exists the dominion of sin, it can make a temple of the Holy Ghost, and the criminal, even the most degraded, can thus be transformed into the image of our Divine Saviour.

"Come unto me," says the Lord, "all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. I am meek and lowly in heart." Oh! yes, let us go to him, just as we are, with the desire of reaching the measure of the perfect stature of Christ.

THE TEACHER'S AIM, AND HOW TO SECURE IT.

No Christian would engage in the work of Sunday-school teaching without being, in some measure at least, convinced of its efficacy.

But the question is, do we sufficiently consider this—that it is appointed of God, that he recognises it? And when we take our seats before our classes, does this thought continually go with us there—that God follows us, that the words we are now uttering are capable of being the means of the salvation of the benighted souls before us? Do we ever speak with the authority of St. Paul, "as though God did beseech"?

There are dead souls before us, and knowing it, do we feel we that we have the restorative ready to be imparted, and do we impart it with the expectation of seeing the new life induced? These are momentous considerations. When a child is first sent to school there is no uncertainty expressed as to whether the child can receive the instruction necessary to develop the powers latent. With the proper care and treatment the existence of the faculties is first discovered, then nurtured and gradually developed, the mind begins to unfold, and so continues until it has attained to excellence.

So ought we to look upon the matter of Sunday-school teaching, believing that, if carried out rightly, it is productive of the consequences intended. We must get out of our minds all feeling of mere form and ceremony; our work is eminently practical. What is the aim of Sunday-schools? Is not man fallen? Has not sin dominion over the hearts of all as soon as they are born? Sunday-schools have for their aim the salvation of each lost soul. This is emphatically their

primary object. Salvation is a practical thing, and is practicably obtainable in the Sunday-school. The young and tender branch can be early grafted into the vine, and, drawing strength from its life-giving source, sooner becomes the strong and abiding branch, bearing much fruit.

My fellow-teachers, let such results be the end you are striving for. Be zealous in sowing the good seed; pray that it may take root downward; and honour your master by *looking* for the bearing of much fruit upward.

Having this view of Sunday-school teaching, in order to bring about such results the teacher must have a *deep interest in the personal salvation of each one of the class*. We admire earnestness wherever we see it, and in whatever it is betrayed. We admire the *earnestness*, though we may have to deprecate the cause in which the earnestness is manifested. To be in earnest is the only safeguard against half-heartedness; and this is especially the case with Sunday-school teaching, where so much patience has to be exercised, so many discouragements to be borne, and where there seems to be so much failure. Unless the teacher is really in earnest, the result will be either mere formality or withdrawal from the work.

Now this earnestness ought to make the teacher have a longing for the salvation of each one of his class, not recognising them collectively merely, but also individually, endeavouring to win the heart of each one to Christ. It should be an affectionate interest in each child. Paley says, "There is nothing children imitate or apply more readily than expressions of affection and aversion, of approbation, hatred, resentment, and the like; and when these passions and expressions are once connected, which they soon will be, by the same association which unites words with their ideas, the passion will follow the expression, and attach upon the object to which the child has been accustomed to apply the epithet." We must show each one that his happiness and eternal welfare are sought by us. And this solicitude must be carried beyond the school, in the street, rambling in the fields, visiting, or wherever we may meet them: the kind word must be ready, the word in season spoken.

And there is additional reason for this, for whilst in the class, the children are, to a considerable degree, under restraint, the natural disposition of each individual child is greatly hidden, and the tendencies of their minds so blended together, as to render it exceedingly difficult to obtain an insight of the particular character and disposition of any one of the class. And it is only when this restraint is put off, and these dispositions and tenden-

cies brought to light and separated, that we can obtain that knowledge which will enable us to deal successfully with any particular character and dispositions, when it is necessary that we should do so.

Then considering these two points, let us not be content with general results. A regular, orderly, attentive, and interested class is no small achievement, but we must not stop here; these *general* results must not satisfy us. That each child may have the love of God shed abroad in the heart, by the application of the meritorious blood of Jesus, through the operation of the Holy Spirit—this and nothing short of this, ought to *satisfy* us. Oh that every teacher would pray more for the Holy Spirit's operation, not endeavouring to subdue the unruly wills of the children by his own power, not trusting to his own strength, which is abject weakness, but relying only on the mighty power of that Spirit by whose influence the hard heart is softened, the unruly will brought into subjection, and the soul everlastingly saved!

Sunday Teachers Treasury.

HOW TO DO GOOD.

Our Redeemer not only "died for our sins," but he also "left us an example that we should follow his steps." He "went about doing good." He graciously remarked, "It is more blessed to give to receive." The best proof of our faith must be seen in our practice.

DO ALL THE GOOD YOU CAN.

1 Tim. vi. 17-19. Col. i. 10. 2 Cor. ix. 8-11.

AS PROMPTLY AS YOU CAN.

2 Tim. iv. 2-5. Gal. i 15, 16.

IN ALL THE WAYS YOU CAN.

1 Cor. xv. 58. Eph. vi. 8.

TO ALL THE PEOPLE YOU CAN.

Matt. v. 44, 45. Luke vi. 27-35.

AT ALL THE TIMES YOU CAN.

Prov. iii. 27, 28. Gal. vi. 10.

AND AS LONG AS YOU CAN.

Eccles. ix. 10. Gal. vi. 9. Titus ii. 11-14.

And let us ever remember what is said by the Master:—"So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do."—Luke xvii. 10.

THE WAYS OF THE HOLY GHOST.

He who had been known as "God," "the Lord God," as "God Almighty," and "Jehovah," the covenant God with Israel, was not revealed in the full glory of His name until the commencement of the present dispensation. There was grace in God and gifts by grace which were not fully unfolded; but this is done in the name which is now published to us—the name of "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." This is the full name or glory of our God; and grace and gifts of grace are effectually brought to us by that dispensation which publishes it. Thus, it was not until the present age, that the full name and glory of our God was published. The Father had been working, it is true, in all ages of the Jewish times; but still Israel was put nationally under God, simply as "Jehovah." The revelation of "the Father" had to wait for the ministry of the Son, and certain dispensations had to finish their course, ere the Son could come forth. The Son could not have been the minister of the law—such ministry would not have been worthy of Him who dwelt in the bosom of the Father. It was committed to angels. And the Son did not come forth in ministry till the "great salvation" was ready to be published, (Heb. ii. 1. 2.) So, the manifestation of the Holy Ghost waited for its due time. The Holy Ghost could not wait on the ministry of the law, any more than the Son. Smoke and lightning and the voice of thunder were there, (Exod. xix. ;) but the Holy Ghost came forth with His gifts and powers, to wait on the ministry of the Son, on the publication of the great salvation, (Heb. ii. 4.) The Spirit of God could not be a spirit of bondage generating fear—the law may do that, but the Holy Ghost must generate confidence. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

Till the Son of God had finished His work, the Holy Ghost could not come forth. The heart must first be purged from an evil conscience, so that the temple might be sanctified for the indwelling Spirit, and the holy furniture (that is, the spirit of liberty and adoption, and the knowledge of glory) must be prepared for

this temple; and all this could be done only by the *death, resurrection, and ascension of the Son*. The revelation of the Holy Ghost waited for these things. He had been, it is true, the holy power in all, from the beginning. He had spoken by the prophets. He was the strength of judges and kings. He was the power of faith, of service, and of suffering, in all the people of God. But all this was below the place which He now takes in the Church.

His indwelling in us, as in His temple, had not been of old; but now He does so dwell, spreading out a kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy. As the Spirit of wisdom, He gives us "the mind of Christ," spiritual senses for the discerning of good and evil. As the Spirit of Worship, He enables us to call God "Father," and Jesus "Lord." He also makes intercession for us, with groanings that cannot be uttered. He sheds abroad in the heart "the love of God," and causes us "to abound in hope." He is *in* us a well of water springing up into everlasting life; and He is the source also of "rivers of living waters," flowing forth *from* us to refresh the weary. And He forms the saints together as "a spiritual house," where "spiritual sacrifices" are offered; no longer admitting "a worldly sanctuary," and "carnal ordinances;" for they are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit, and gifts, causing them all to grow up into Christ in all things, are dispensed among them.

These are some of the ways of the Holy Ghost in His kingdom within the saints—these are His works which shine in the place of His dominion. He is there an Earnest, an Unction, and a Witness. He tell us "plainly of the Father," and "takes of the things of Christ," to "show them to us." His presence in us is so pure, that there is no evil that He does not resent and grieve over (Eph. iv. 30); and yet so tender and sympathising, that there is nothing of godly sorrow that He does not feel and groan over (Rom. viii. 23). He causes hope to abound; He imparts the sense of full divine favour; He reads to our conscience a title to calm and entire assurance. There is nothing of feebleness, or narrowness, or uncertainty in the place of His power. His operations sa-

your of a kingdom, and a kingdom of God too, full of beauty and strength. We have to own how little we live in the virtue and sunshine of it; but still, this is what it is in itself, though our narrow and hindered hearts so poorly possess themselves of it. And His handiwork is to have its praise from us; and His glory in His temple is to be declared. It is well to be humbled at times, by testing ourselves in reference to such an indwelling kingdom; but the kingdom itself is not to be measured.

Precious, I need not say, beloved, all this mystery is. The whole order of things to which we are introduced tells us (and this is full of richest comfort) that it is God and not ourselves we have now immediately to do with.

A REFUGE FROM THE STORM.

It is far better to be drawn to God by the joys of heaven, than driven by the sorrows of earth. And yet, how many refuse to be so drawn, and wait, and wait, and wait, until the storm comes which drives them into the haven of rest!

In the case of many, the still, soft voice of Jesus's invitation is entirely unheeded. His gentle knocks at the door of the heart are disregarded, till He, unwilling to let them perish, calls with a louder voice, and puts forth stronger means to bring them to Himself. We are well content that this world should be our home, and our resting-place, as long as all around us is bright and fair, and we forget the nobler rest and the brighter land above. Our best and kindest Friend cannot let us continue so. He sees how we are leaning upon earthly supports, and, one by one, He takes them away. He sees how our hearts cling to loved ones here, and slowly and regretfully He removes them from our grasp, and carries them above,—then points us upward, and bids us follow. A shepherd wants to get his flock safely sheltered in the fold before the shadows of night fall around; but the sheep will not hear his voice, they will not follow. He then stoops down, and taking up a lamb in his arms, he carries it to the fold. The companions of the lamb, seeing one of their num-

ber thus taken away, have their attention drawn to the shepherd, and are induced to follow.

Does not the Great Shepherd often deal with souls thus? He cried in His deep love and pity when on earth, "Ye will not come unto Me, that ye might have life." And, again, amid a gush of tears, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem; how often would have gathered you! . . . but ye would not." Jesus cannot leave souls to perish, without doing his utmost to save them. If they will not be drawn to Him by His love, they must, if possible, be driven by sorrow. Is Jesus drawing you now? Why not yield yourselves to Him? Why wait till the storm drives you to His bosom? You may wait too long, and that storm from which there is no refuge may burst in all its terrors on your head when life on earth shall be over, and a Saviour, unsought while He was so near to pardon, becomes your righteous Judge; and instead of the sweet words, "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest," which He now breathes in your ear, that same voice will say, "Depart from Me." That time is not yet come. The Shepherd is seeking the lost one, whom He has ransomed with His precious blood. Why lengthen the weary way he has to come? Hear him cry, "How can I give thee up?" and be won by the power of his great love to give yourselves to him.

Do you sometimes think of giving yourself to God, but still delay? Do you think that, as week after week passes away, you can be still in the same relation to God? No; every time you reject the call of Christ, and resist the pleadings of his Spirit in your heart, you become more hardened to the truth, and less likely to come to your Saviour at all.

Picture to yourselves two vessels approaching a harbour. One comes with every sail unfurled, gliding lightly and swiftly over the waves. The people throng the shore, ready to welcome it as it enters; and as it comes nearer and nearer, riding so majestically and easily over the rough billows, it enters the port amid hearty greetings, and swelling music, and echoing joy. The voyage is over; the haven is reached; the storms are for ever hushed, and now all is REST.

But look! There is another vessel coming, if that poor shattered thing deserves the name; it comes slowly and sadly along; you almost expect it to disappear beneath the waves, ere it arrives. No sails are visible; the storms have torn them away. The waters are gaining in it, and as each wave dashes over its deck, you wonder whether it will ever rise again. At last, it also enters the port of safety, but with great difficulty and danger.

Now, which is best? Would you not like to enter heaven as "more than conqueror;" as one who has triumphed over the world in all its forms, and fought your way through, pressing on through every storm, until, as you near the shores of the land of rest, you hear the music of the harpers harping upon their harps; you catch the sounds of distant hallelujahs wafted to your ears, and you see shining forms hovering over you to conduct you home?—

"And ONE who is "brightest of all" shall be there.
And safe through the billows thy spirit He'll bear;
Then, fearless, on pinions of love thou shalt rise,
Rejoicing to pass to thy home in the skies."

Lot clung to Sodom, even though told that its destruction was so near; and urged to escape for his life, and flee to the mountain, lest he be consumed. Instead of gratefully obeying this call, he begins to plead, "Not so, Lord;" and asks to be allowed to take refuge in a little city near to Sodom. He feared death if he took the path to which God was pointing, and thought he was only safe in some way of his own devising. God says, "Escape there;" and Lot answers, "Lord, if I go there, I shall die; let me go another way!" He has not learned the secret of casting himself upon God in childlike trust. He has not yet learned, like Abraham, to go forth at the call of God, not knowing whither he went, but content to be led on in the dark. He thinks there is greater safety in the little city, built by the hands of man, than in the strong mountain made by the power of God.

Oh, has not this a lesson for you? Is not God pointing you to a mountain where only there is safety and rest? See him, as he directs you to Mount Calvary. Look upon that cross on its sum-

mit; see on it that bleeding One. Look to Jesus; and, looking there, eternal life is yours.

But stay not in all the plain, and look not behind thee. Let the world be behind thee, sin behind thee, self behind thee; all but Christ and let him appear in full view. Keep your eye on JESUS, and then his beauty and his love will so win your heart, and allure you onward, that you will count all things but loss, that you may know him, the Fountain of Life. By committing yourself to the care of Jesus, you will get the victory over all, and at last be more than conqueror. Beware of letting anything come between you and God. It may be only a little thing, but it is enough to hide him from your view. Ask him to keep you near his side, that so you may be kept unspotted from the world.

ETERNITY!

OH! ETERNITY!—As I write the word and pause, it seems to me almost too terrible a word to be! Let the most settled Christian reflect on the literal meaning of that thought, "Eternal Death," and he must shrink and shudder to think that maybe the sister who has played with him, or the wife who has walked the path of life with him, or the child who has gone forth from his house to tread life's journey alone, may yet hear the sentence which commits them to that prison without hope.

ETERNITY! The sands lie yards deep upon the shores. They stretch round all the continents and islands in the world. They extend in broad, trackless belts under the burning suns of Africa. They lie for miles and miles in wearisome and hidden flats beneath every ocean and every sea. And yet these sands unnumbered, are no more measure for the years of eternity than the grains in an hour-glass are of the grains on the plains of Sahara.

ETERNITY! Oh wholesome, dreadful thought! Once born into this world, an existence never-ending lies inevitable before each and all. To each, in God's almighty love, is given the opportunity to turn and live; but to each that opportunity is given only in one brief span, and that is now. What drowning man, when the single rope which can save him is

flung across the brine, but will not only grasp it, but grasp it instantly! It may be borne away from him by the next wave, and he is lost. How little knows the world of instant grasping of the proffered help of Christ! They are few but tarry, and hesitate, and question; many who in the midst of this tarrying, have heard the clock of eternity strike, and the door of hope shut for ever! For soon—how soon—shall the door be shut on every one who has not been reconciled to God through the Lord Jesus!—on the young and beautiful, rejoicing in early delight, but not in God; on the aged and hardened, clutching the gold his withering fingers must soon let drop for ever; on the victim of sensuality; on the votary of prurer art, who is not Christ's; on all—but those who have taken the offered salvation on its humbling, but soul-gladdening terms—the reception of God's free mercy through Christ Jesus.—*Overton's Question.*

"IS GOD INFLUENCED BY PRAYER."

Yes. If anything is certain, that is certain. Hear his own words: "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." "Ask and ye shall receive." "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do." "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit."

These declarations are entirely explicit; and they admit of but one interpretation.—They show not only a command for prayer, but also a promise for prayer. Our blessed Lord spake a parable to this end, that "men ought always to pray, and not to faint." He spake another parable to the end that men should persist in prayer; and that persistency in prayer shall be rewarded. "But your trouble arises from God's immutability." No it does not; it arises from your failing to distinguish between the immutability of God and the immutability of a mountain. You first assume, or permit your pupils to assume, what God has nowhere affirmed, and then gravely enquire, how this impediment is to be surmounted. There is no impediment, none whatever. God is immutably deter-

mined to hear and reward our prayer. He is unalterably pledged to bestow blessings on those who fervently pray for them, which he will not give to those who do not ask. If you believe this, stick to your belief, and act upon it.—*Congregationalist.*

NO TIME TO READ.

Offer a good book to some people, they will give you the above reply. Or ask them to subscribe for some good periodical, they will make the same response; no time to read. This, they think, is a true and justifiable excuse for them. But very many of those same characters have, almost any time, time enough to commence, and long continue, and very tedious to end, a dry, poor, if not vain conversation, and use a multiplicity of words.

No time to read! Nevertheless they have time enough to hunt up and get their tobacco, smoke pipes and cigars, and sit together for hours, every day, and raise a volley of tobacco smoke.

No time to read! Yet they have time to spend every week a day or two, in travelling about, visiting from house to house, keeping coffee and tea parties, and other feasts of pleasure, and thus killing their time in worse than idleness.

No time to read! Yet they have a great relish to go to committees, meetings, elections, and other gatherings, and oftentimes will go idling and drowning their precious time away in worse than idleness.

No time to read! Yet others make it almost their regular business in the evening of the day, to sit about in work-shops, store-rooms, or tipping-houses, spending their long evening hours in vain chit-chat and tattling, butchering up their time in this way.

No time to read! Yet others misimprove their time, by decorating the body, but neglecting the soul; thinking more about their dress, than about their immortal spirits; spending much of their time before the looking-glass, to get their dress to please them, in order to make a fair show, and hide deformity, fixing on their ruffles and artificials, setting on their breastpins and finger-rings, and a few more such jewelries and fooleries.

Now, if the above different characters would live more by a becoming system, purchase good books, subscribe for good papers, and regularly attend to reading, and thereby improve their time and intellects, and cultivate the desire and principle for reading by reading, we should then soon have, in general, a better state of morals, brighter minds and better hearts, and a more pious and useful society. The Lord send the reformation.

THE LORD OF THE HARVEST.

During almost six thousand years, the Son of God has been gathering out for Himself that people which the Father gave to Him before the world was. Since the day He laid His gracious hand on the young Abel, and taught him to offer in faith the lamb of sacrifice, up to the present hour, redeemed men have been finding all their joy in gathering round Him.

When His body was laid in Joseph's tomb, the Father said anew, "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation." But long ere then, the Son of God, the Angel who redeemed Israel, had gathered out a multitude of living stones to place on that foundation. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under, her wings and ye would not!"

Yet though His tears fell over the rejecters of His grace, His spirit rejoiced over the great and goodly company of the gathered. Each prophet slain, each messenger stoned, only went to be a bright stone in the glorious foundation. The sweet singer of Israel describes the Lord as gathering the waters of the sea together as an heap, and by the arm of His gracious power also gathering together the outcasts of Israel, healing the broken in heart and binding up their wounds.

At length He came forth to be the sacrifice. Before He laid life down, He showed His people the way to gather in its fruits when He should be gone to take the Mediator's place within the veil. Beautiful instances they are of the way He persuaded weary heads to lay them down upon His breast. Calm, sudden, commanding, was the voice with which He bade the laden conscience to be for ever free. Perhaps if all had been recorded, there would not have been time in our short pilgrim life to read it all and try to be like Jesus.

The great SOUL-GATHERER said,—HE THAT GATHERETH NOT WITH ME SCATTERETH ABROAD.

He left the work on earth to His members, under the moving power, the con-

stant presence and promised effusion of the Holy Ghost. Do we not grieve the divine and loving Spirit by forgetting who it is that works the wonder, and shews the sign in the name of Jesus. That name has power, charm, spell, balsam in it to do wonders, such as have not yet entered into the heart of the Church to conceive;

"Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Doth his successive journeys run,
His name, like sweet perfume, shall rise
With every morning sacrifice."

And yet take that name, preach it, sing of it, live it out, embody it in the presence of a dead sinner for a lifetime, where the Holy Ghost is not given, it is but a waste breath, a dark ministry of condemnation.

When the door-key of your chamber turns—the nearest and dearest earthly friends, and all your earthly toil, shut out—is it not the bliss of the everlasting life begun, to look up to the Son of God and feel, HE IS MINE? He, the full expression of the Father's love, is revealed now and here to my inward eye by God the Holy Ghost. Nearly two thousand years ago He gave Himself for me. He gave Himself to me as I lay dead in sin. The touch was life. Ever since then, each day that my unbelief has not hindered, He has shewn me that in Himself I possess an exhaustless mine. Not more than one vein of it may I be able to work in this life, but its treasures shall expand and shine around me under the perfect light of glory. It is no dumb idol I bow before. It is no dead Christ with the five wounds worshipped by Rome; not the languid Sufferer whose seven last sentences her priesthood mutters, as though to bind His lips to silence now, lest He should say again, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." All that is over.

"'Tis finish'd—all his groans are past;
His blood, his pain, and toils,
Have fully vanquished our foes,
And crown'd him with their spoils."

He to whom we pray *does* answer us. He who spake to Abraham when entreating for the cities of the plain, speaks still to such as intercede for those toward whom the flames are making rapid way. Before the Father's throne He stands pledged to present his blood within the

veil till His elect are sealed, His harvest gathered, and the garner filled.

Being still so unlike Him whom I love, ought I not then to spend the reclusive hours in mourning for the sin that has so long robbed me of His presence? In beholding Him thus undistractedly, shall not His love liken me the more quickly to Himself? No. Though His hand be resting on my head to cover me from every ill, though His eye meets mine with unutterable love, it passes beyond me, it rests on the world that perishes for want of Him. It says, *Gather with Me there*. The white field waits to be reaped. His hour to reap has come. Time was when He used men singly as reapers in His field, each planning his own work and doing it by His blessing. But now we look, and behold one like unto the Son of Man sits on the cloud of blessing, putting all men out of sight and wielding a great, pliant sickle made of believers of every class, age, and name. A sickle moves not when the reaper stays his hand. To-day Christ does the whole, and He works in a most simple, yet sovereign way. How clearly does His love for His people come out in His choice of means. He could do it all—for He does it sometimes—without any visible human instrumentality. No instances of His power to save are so precious to His children as these.

A man, sitting by his own fireside alone at midnight, took out his watch to wind it up before stepping into a bed whence prayer had never risen. How often had he looked on the face of that watch before! And yet, this time, the hands pointing to the Roman figure XII. whispered that time was passing, and the Judge at hand, and that his past life was lost and very vile. That night the watch lay under the pillow of an awakened man. How easily, if He pleased, the Lord of the harvest might gather thus. By one corpse, one coffin, one passing hearse, He could arrest a household, street, or town. The gracious Saviour will still to share the work with His people, and prefers to speak the word of power through lips of flesh.

Has He not begun to bring His Church to represent the very attitude He held when He left His Father's bosom to seek the lost? He wills that of her it should at

last truthfully be spoken by a world amazed: "The Church of God hath come down from her table of communion, her mount of prayer, into our sin-cursed world to seek that which is lost." Is not this one way in which she can fill up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ? The travail of His soul is over—her travail endures. He has drawn her closer to Himself. She has seen her own once filthy hands grow white in clasping the hem of His glorious garment. While she only held it with timid touch, fearing to pollute it, she had an imperfect sense of healing. A more fearless grasp of the Beloved has extinguished the relish for sin. She knows that what He has done for her, He can do for all. Her eye is on the band of sinners that stands closest on the field to the prince of darkness. She has discovered that *Jesus fears not contact with the grossest sin*, since at His touch *SIN DIES*. And now, to whichever point of assault or defence He shall beckon her, will she not go forth? "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, terrible as an army with banners?"

Do you feel that this work belongs to you, believer in Jesus? Or have you not met Him yet as Lord of the Harvest? There was a day when He did send you with a sweet message of love to a fellow-sinner's soul; and if it were but that once, do you not look back to it as one of the happiest hours of your soul's history? Did not a strange gleam of joy pass through your spiritual being, that was peculiar to that hour? May it not come again? Jesus can recall it if you will go down to-day and watch for His passing through the harvest-field. Your circle looks so circumscribed, your life has become so commonplace, and in yourself you feel as if your path and progress were like that of a poor snail, fitted only to deform the garden of God instead of being useful there, creeping along, terrified at each strange sound or touch that meets you, always most ready to hide when you are needed.

Give thyself to Him to be transformed—still weak, still helpless, still infirm—in to just what He requires to work by. Without any fear of thy sharing His glory

In the work, His power may rest on thee. He will cut off from thee thy place of retreat. He will send thee on rejoicing in His sunshine. If good for nothing else, thou shalt be able to say, wherever thou creep'st, and to whomsoever thou meet'st, "There is a sun—the sun is shining—the sun is shining for thee and me."

What if these sweet days of ingathering were to cease! How could we live on without them? How could we meet the Lord of the harvest with no more than these sheaves gathered? The very thought brings back to us the urgent haste of those days we have seen in harvest, when the air was sultry, each leaf and stalk were still, and the sun darted golden beams, through the brazen sky, upon the yellow standing corn. You saw a speck of fleecy cloud upon the heavens. It told that the poor man's bread was in danger, and, with the neighbours, you hastened down—all other work forgotten—to cut and house the precious grain before the thunder-clouds could pour their deluge down.

God's harvest days on this earth of ours have always, as yet, come before a storm. Let us work as hard as if it should be so once more. Let us work as those who ever see the bright vision of the Son of man, seated on the white cloud, crowned and reaping; receiving now the praises of thousands upon thousands who a few years ago were lying dumb, in chains of unbelief. Let us work as those who also see the form of a destroying angel, with the sickle of vengeance, standing over against the great winepress of the wrath of God. Let us work in the glad certainty, that the storm which is about to break, however long and protracted it may be, shall be the last ushering in the peals of joy which shall announce that the prayer He gave us has been answered, "Thy kingdom come!"

If the Lord is using the simplest means to reap His harvest, He is also doing it in a most sovereign way. Praying families are seeing their own outcasts gathered. The foot of the long-sought prodigal is turning home. Where the reapers rejoice, the sowers long time toiled; and many a sower remains to see his own field reaped, and to lead the harvest-home. The healing waters gush forth in answer

to prayers, long forgotten by men, but ever remembered by God. They do not gush forth everywhere in the same way, seldom anywhere in the old channels. They gush forth! and thither each child of God *who is resolved to see Jesus pass by* speeds to hail them. The King's step is heard, and they stop not to say, "But, Lord, we looked for Thee rather there or thus." He comes not where we looked for him; he seems to do without the chariot we had built for him; he does not use our earnestly prepared means; but *he is come*, and it is enough." The boon of his presence is so utterly priceless, that anywhere and anyhow he is with anthems hailed. The death around us was so appalling, sinners were hastening by a thousand paths, uncounted down to destruction, but now the plague is staved, chains are breaking, the sinitten Rock is beset with cries of

"Let me hide myself in Thee!"

And no sooner does any one deaf to false report, freed from prejudice, heartily and wholly give himself to hail the blessing and secure the tarrying of the King, than he shall find that through *his* means also, and in every vessel he can lay out to receive the falling rain, there shall be waters of refreshing. Christ absent was our only sorrow. Christ among us shall be our life and joy.

To be shut out from seeing or hearing of God's working, leaves us like the servants of a king who should be sent away to keep a palace where the monarch never comes. It would bring some reward, and a sense of duty done, to keep the chambers bright—the chair of state, the casket for the crown. They could still shew where once the royal children slept, and keep from weeds the gardens where they once had worked and played. But for the personal attendants of a sovereign beloved to be sent to such a place—out of hearing, out of sight, out of call,—were but a form of banishment.

Divine Reaper! Alpha and Omega of Thy work as well as of Thy word, able to fill the hearts which Thou hast made, and to work by every feeble arm, appear! Shine in through every lattice of the house of God! Awake each sleeping child! Shew us how the table is laden,

how the fountain flows! Reach down to each anew the vesture of salvation, the garments of praise! Cause but one symphony from the harps on high to steal over our hearts till we overhear the joy wherewith, in the presence of thine angels, there is joy over the work Thou art doing in our world. Wash from us our blood-guilty stains, and to-day give us, even to the weakest woman and the smallest child, our work for Thee!

CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

There is much of a Christian experience that does not admit of expression. Some of the deeper and diviner emotions of his soul can only be felt, but felt unseen by the world. "*The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*" It needs spiritual vision to discern spiritual things. The infidel may raise objections against the foundations of our faith—the skeptic may sneer and mock at all we hold sacred and dear to immortal beings—an ungodly world may spurn the very thoughts most fondly cherished in a Christian's heart, but this can never overthrow the evidence that every converted man has within his own soul.

If I have the Spirit witnessing with my spirit that I am a child of God, then there is no argument however strong—no sophistry however plausible—no power however great can convince me that my hope is not sure and steadfast.

And therefore it often happens that when a simple, illiterate believer stands up amid all his simplicity to argue for the truth of his religion against some learned skeptic, and being unable to meet the superior power or answer the acute arguments of his adversary, it is with utter dismay he sees post after post taken, and he compelled to retreat step by step until he retires into the citadel of his own heart,

and then there is no argument and no sophistry from the whole combined phalanx of infidelity—no power in earth or hell can dislodge him.

Every Christian goes forth to the world a living argument for the truth of his religion which all the ingenuity of unbelievers can never answer. He is a mystery they cannot solve—a problem they cannot explain. Every Christian is a light created by Divine agency and sent forth to shine, and he does shine in the face, of a wicked world, and all the darkness of earth cannot hide it. Satan and all his emissaries cannot quench the fire that burns on the holy altar of every believer's heart.

Montreal.

J. T.

CONVERSION OF MARTIN BOOS, AN EVANGELICAL ROMISH PRIEST.

(Regarding him, that eminently holy man, the Rev. Robt. M. McChesney, thus expresses himself: "If dear Martin Boos were alive, pastor of the Church of Rome though he was, he would have been welcome to my pulpit; and who that knows the value of souls and the value of a living testimony would say it was wrong?"—*Translator.*)

"In 1788 or 1789," he relates; "I visited a sick woman who was distinguished for deep humility and exemplary piety. 'You shall die in great peace, shall you not?' I said to her. 'Why?' asked she. 'You have led such a pious, such a virtuous life,' I replied. 'Ah, she said, with a sweet smile; 'if I trusted in my piety, I would deserve nothing but hell. No, no, I rest only on Jesus, my Saviour.' Then looking at me with surprise, she added, 'What kind of a priest are you? What consolations do you give me? How could I stand for a moment before the judgment seat of God, where every one shall give account even of his idle words, if Christ was not my rock? I would certainly be lost, if I looked to myself, to my merits, for the blessedness of heaven. What man is there who is pure in the eyes of the Eternal? Which of our actions, of our vir-

ties, would be of the necessary weight, if He should weigh it in His balance? No; if Christ had not died for me, if He had not satisfied the justice of God and paid my debts, all my good works would not save me from endless wrath. He, He alone is my Hope, my Salvation and my Joy.'

"These words, coming from the mouth of a woman in great reputation for holiness, were as a bright light shining into the eyes of Martin Boos. From that time he received Christ as his perfect righteousness, and found peace and the joy of salvation. From that time also he had to endure all kinds of persecution: his preaching, impressed with the wholesome doctrines of the Gospel, could not fail to stir up against him violent enemies. To preach a free salvation, a salvation given by God, and which man can and ought to receive only as a gift, as merely an alms—to preach such a doctrine in a Church which, while it preserves the name of Christ, puts in His place human works as means of redemption, was it not to undermine the foundation of that Church and to expose oneself to her severest punishments? However, Boos once settled on the sure Foundation, remained there; the Lord kept him on it and enabled him to suffer with joy for His name."

T. F.

Metis, C. E.

MEMORIES ABOVE.

There is an upper sanctuary, and in the hallowed precincts of that sanctuary there are memories.

Gabriel remembers when he united in song with the morning stars, and with all the sons of God shouted for joy. Nor does he forget that night on the plains of Bethlehem, when the heavenly host announced, "Peace on earth, and good will to men." Long as is the period over which his memory may run, no word or thought arises to bring the blush of shame to his cheek. And is it possible that man without a blush may take his place among that angelic throng? Is it possible that in the progress of eternity you may number as many ages as Gabriel now numbers, and like him in all those ages find no

thought that swerves from perfect rectitude?

Abel, in those seats of bliss, free from envy and strife and violence, remembers the scenes of earth, his father's house, his mother's prayers, the acceptable sacrifice which he offered. Abraham, the father of the faithful—Abraham, whose memory is fragrant throughout the whole earth—Abraham, the friend of God, remembers what that friendship cost him. How joyful now the thought that he left country and kindred; that he sojourned a stranger in a strange land, living by faith—a faith that failed not when God required his only son, leaving him to hope against hope.

Thousands of years have rolled away, and still Moses remembers that he esteemed the reproach of Christ a greater treasure than the riches of Egypt. In that rest which remains to the people of God, he calls to mind Pisgah's top, and the land of promise which he saw afar off.

The Saviour, "for the joy set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame." Amid all the sorrows of earth he looked forward to the joys of heaven; and now amid the joys of heaven, does he not look back to the sorrows of earth? Does he forget the price paid, and the agonies endured for his redeemed?

Multitudes now suffering with him on earth look forward to those joys. Other multitudes, brought home to God, look back upon that great tribulation out of which they came. Some remember the stake and the faggot, some the lion's teeth, some the dreary dungeon, some the painful sickness, some the bereavements that made the heart bleed, and life seem almost insupportable. Light seem their afflictions now, and joyful is the remembrance of the grace that enabled them to endure.

Reader, what memories are you laying up in store for that future world? Is a mansion in that upper sanctuary prepared for you? Do you believe in Jesus as *your* Saviour? Do you now suffer with Christ, that there you may reign with him? Do you now die to sin, that you may live to God? Are you fighting the good fight, that you may there wear the crown?

Some in that world will remember a

Saviour disregarded, life refused, mercy despised. But you, when millions of years hence, you look back on your present thoughts and choice, what shall you remember? Shall it not be that you were wise; that you listened to the voice of mercy? Do you not with Moses give up sin and choose holiness? This precious Saviour of whom you hear, do you not look to him? How joyfully the dying thief remembers the appeal he made in the hour of his extremity. How wide the gulf that separates those two thieves. Shall a gulf equally wide separate you and some other one who reads these pages?

Some look to the judgment. They say, Try to view every act as there you will view it. This is well. The judgment day approaches, the day when every word and every thought will be impartially weighed. But after the judgment comes eternity. Suppose you do not repent and believe. In all that eternity will you cease to regret that you failed to improve the present opportunity? On the other hand, suppose now you hear and live. Will you ever cease to rejoice? Angels rejoice over one sinner that repenteth. When your head presses your dying pillow, what thought will give you so much satisfaction as the thought that you have truly repented of sin? On earth men celebrate the day of their birth. Often their friends commemorate the day of their death. But in eternity, what day will be so marked, what day will be so hailed with joy, as the day on which you repented? Shall this be that ever memorable day, the birthday of your soul?

THE DECEITFUL HOPE.

"And their hope shall be like the giving up of the ghost."—JOB xi. 20.

Such is the solemn and impressive language employed to describe the final disappointment of the unrepenting and ungodly in the hour of departure from this world of hope, trial, and probation. Such is the nature and affect of that fearful experience in the article of death, which all have encountered who have gone down to the land of silence, darkness, and the grave, leaning on a false foundation.

Wherever the word of God is revealed

almost every person cherishes some kind of hope. Beside that one hope, which is as an anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast, there are a great variety which are all fatal. From the hardened infidel up through all the grades of fundamental error, and through the influence of many deceptive impressions, multitudes gain and cherish a hope that all will be well. The man of business anticipates some time, yet future, of leisure to repent; while he of many kind affections trusts to divine clemency either to insure conversion or preserve him from perishing without. The merely selfish seeker obtains the notion that his sins are forgiven, and considers the joy that attends as evidence of regeneration. Even the hardened hypocrite often fancies that when his several specific objects are accomplished, he will become honest with himself, his fellow-men, and with his final Judge.

These hopes, thus erected on sandy foundations, will be like the spider's web when the fiery trial comes; for other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, even Jesus Christ.

Yet, until the very last moment, the self-deluding sinner will cling to these fatal hopes, and then when he must abandon them, it is like the giving up of the ghost. The moral features of the immortal soul are struck with a hue analogous in some respects to that which marks the form it is about to leave.

1. It is giving up that which is very dear. Like life itself, it has been ardently fostered. In order to maintain it, reflection has been shunned, Scripture perverted, the ministry derided, friendship grieved, and the Holy Spirit insulted. The delusions of error have been sought, and their preachers trusted. When conscience has warned him, he has refused to examine; when sickness assailed, he has sometimes trembled, but still clung fast to his hope. It has eased the corrodings of remorse, and silenced the whisperings of fear. Therefore he has become fond of his delusion. Does he trust to the religion of form, or rely on the words of an absolving priest, or fancy there is no eternal pain, or reject an all-sufficient atonement—mark how wrathful he becomes when his platform is shaken, and his beautiful edifice denounced

as utterly insecure. No bitterness of the human heart can exceed that of a man who feels that his long-cherished hope is earnestly and absolutely condemned. Still he finds consolation in his viperous hope still cherishes it in his bosom. At last, when the fatal crisis has arrived, and his hope must die, it winds its cold, expiring coil around his soul, and hisses his eternal doom: "For at the last, it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder."

2. Yet, dear as it is, it must be given up. As there is no discharge in the great struggle with death, so there is none in the contest of false hopes with eternity, in all her irresistible light. The delusions of sophistry, the flattery of friends, the dread habit of self-deception, all are unavailing. The vulgar and the refined; the timid and the brave; the stupid and the sensitive; the beautiful and the strong, must alike fall before the scythe of Time, which cuts down impartially all, and the sword of the Spirit, which pierceth the vital depths of the departing soul. We remember how Voltaire begged for the dread hour to be postponed; how Altamont raved in his irrepressible spasms. We have heard of those, who rolling on a couch of agony, when tenderly questioned of the cause, have cried out, "Conscience! conscience!" and expired. There was no escape; the hour and the man had met, and the false hope must die.

3. Yes, it must be given up, and that suddenly. Death even in lingering disease is generally unexpected at the moment of its last effectual touch. So it is with the false hope. A prominent infidel in our country, recently, was carried into the land of death in about two hours, by the bursting of a blood-vessel. His infidelity fled in a moment. His soul was in agony, and he died repeatedly calling on the Deity's holy and reverend name!

4. Depend upon it, the giving up must be soon. Even at the longest, your end is near. Death standeth not far away. So is the hour when these delusive hopes must die. The world will not come to an end until the time which God has fixed and reserved in his own mind, and until the various and sure prophecies which require its existence longer, shall all have been accomplished. But the self-deluded

sinner must soon be compelled to die. His frail but boasted hope will be like a "rolling thing before the whirlwind." A large portion of his life has been spent in compacting together his idolized hope, and the day of his merciful visitation is drawing rapidly to a close. When it comes, he will feel that his race has been short, and his end has overtaken him like an armed man, rushing upon him with irresistible might.

Finally, when given up, it will leave no substitute but perfect despair. When life is resigned, death sits sole monarch of the mortal remains. All the bloom, and lustre, and indications of life forsake the corpse. So it is with the soul, when she is severed from her cherished hope. It is for her to sink in horrid despair. Then will she realize that the day of mercy has vanished, and that of retribution arrived. That soul, all appliances of redemption, all calls to repentance, and offers of pardon, and means of grace, and striving of the Spirit have forsaken forever. That final despair no pen can describe, no heart on this side of eternity conceive.

Surely this will be "their end, and their dreadful end." Then let us examine our hopes. Let us be sure to build only on the imperishable rock. Wherever revivals exist, and the Spirit descends from on high, even there, guard against resting upon any sandy foundation. Seek to hear, learn, and know the whole essential truth of salvation! Let it come probing even painfully the deceitful heart, searching out every iniquity, and cutting to the roots of every unholy habit and affection. By all that the soul is worth, resolve on thoroughness in turning to God. Gaze even on those features of the divine character which are hated by the carnal mind; gaze till hatred shrinks from the pure light of truth, and the yielding heart rests delighted in all the bright perfections of a redeeming God!

PEREMPTORY PRAYERS.—Oh, take heed of peremptory prayers for any temporal enjoyment, for thereby thou beggest but a rod for thy own back! When prayer cannot prevail to keep a temporal mercy alive, yet it will have a powerful influence to keep thy heart alive when that dies.—Gurnall.

THE SPIRIT OF THE FATHER.

(JOHN XVI.)

The Spirit was now to be received of the Father. God had approved Jesus of Nazareth (Acts ii. 22); but it was of the Father that the Holy Ghost was to be received, and He would approve His presence according to this. Look at the character of His presence in the Church, immediately on His being given (Acts ii). What an oil of gladness, what a spirit of liberty and largeness of heart, is He in the saints there! Jesus had received Him in the ascended place, where He Himself had been made full of joy with God's countenance, and giving Him forth from such a place, He manifests Himself here accordingly, imparting at once something of that joy of God's countenance into which there Lord had entered. They "gladly" received the Word, ate their bread with "gladness," and "praised" God. And this joy could easily dry up other sources. They parted with what might have secured "human" delights and provided for "natural" desires. The Holy Ghost in them was joy and liberty, and largeness of heart. It was the Spirit "of the Father." It was the reflection on the saints here of that light which had fallen on Jesus in the holiest. The oil had run down from the beard to the skirts of the clothing.

Indeed, we can form but a poor idea of the value of such a dispensation as this which the Comforter was now to bring, to a soul that had been under the spirit of bondage and of fear gendered by the law. What thoughts of judgment to come were now bidden to depart! What fears of death were now to yield to the consciousness of "present" life in the Son of God! And what would all this be but anointing with an oil of gladness? And the disciples, by this discourse, were under training for this joy and liberty. The schoolmaster was soon to give up his charge—his rod and his book of elements were now to be dispensed with—and in this discourse, the Son is leading the children on their way home to their Father from under such tutors and governors, and they are soon to reach the Father, that they might know, through the Holy Ghost, the liberty and joy of adoption.

Such was this interesting hour to the Church. The Holy Ghost, the witness of the Father and the Son, and thus the Spirit of adoption, was soon to be imparted, and they were now led forth from the school of the law to wait for it. With thoughts of the Father and of the Son, and of the Church's interests in all their love, the Holy Ghost was now to fill the saints. And this accordingly He does in our dispensation. He tells us, as the Lord here promises He should, of the delight that the Father has in the Son, of His purpose to glorify Him, and of our place in that delight and glory. He takes of these things and the like, and shows them unto us.

Look at Genesis xxiv—a well-known and much enjoyed scripture. It sets forth the election of a bride for the Son by the Father—but the place which the servant occupies in it, is just the place of the Holy Ghost in the Church, ministering (as in divine grace) to the joys of the Son, and the Church, in perfecting the purposes of the Father's love. In that scene, the servant of Abraham tells Rebecca of the way in which God had prospered his master—what a favoured and beloved one Isaac was, how he had been "the child of old age," and how Abraham had made him "the heir of all his possessions." He discloses to her the counsels which Abraham had taken touching a wife for this much-loved son of his, and lets her see clearly her own election of God to fill that holy and honoured place. And at last he puts upon her the pledges of this election and of Isaac's love.

Nothing could be more touching and significant than the whole scene. Would that our hearts knew more of the power of all this, under the Holy Ghost, as Rebecca knew it under the hand of Abraham's servant! It was because he had filled her thoughts of Abraham and of Isaac, and of her own interest in them, that she was ready to go with this Stranger all alone across the desert. Her mind was formed by these thoughts; and she was prepared to say to her country, her kindred, and her father's house, "I will go." And the thoughts of our heavenly Father's love, and our Isaac's delight in us, can still give us holy separation from this defiled place

where we dwell. Communion with the Father and the Son through the Comforter, is the holy way of distinguishing the Church from the world. There may be the fear of a coming judgment working something of actual separation from it, or the pride of the Pharisee working religious separations from it, but the present knowledge of the Father's love and the hope of the coming glories of the Son, can alone work a divine separation from its course and its spirit.

The Father's love, of which the Comforter testifies, is an immediate love. It is the love of God that has visited the world in the gift of His Son (see iii. 16;) but the moment this love of God is believed, and the message of reconciliation which it has set forth is received, then are believers entitled, through riches of grace, to know the Father's love, a love that is an immediate love, as the Lord here tells us (xvi. 26. 27.) It is of this love of the Father, as the glory of the Son, that the Comforter tells us by the way homeward. He is our companion for all the journey, and this is His discourse with us.

How did the servant, I doubt not, (to return to the same chapter, Gen. xxiv.) as he accompanied Rebecca across the desert, tell her further of his master, adding many things to what he had already told her in Mesopotamia; for he had been the confidant of his master, and had known him from the beginning. He knew his desire for a son, and God's promise and God's faithfulness. He knew of Abraham's victory over the kings, of his rescue of Lot, and meeting with Melchisedek. He knew of the covenant, the pledge of the inheritance. He knew of the dismissal of Ishmael from the house, and of Isaac's walk in it without a rival—of the mystic journey up Mount Moriah, and of Isaac being thus alive from the dead. All this he knew, and all this doubtless he told her of, as they travelled on together, with these recollections and prospects delighting her, though her back was now turned, and turned for ever, upon her country and her father's house.

And, beloved, were we more conscious-

ly "on the way" with the Comforter, the way would to us, in like manner, be beguiled by His many tales of love and glory, whispering of the Father and of the Son to our inmost souls. Be it so with us, Thy poor people, blessed Lord, more and more!

A NOBLEMAN WHO COULD NOT SAY THE LORD'S PRAYER.

An act of prayer is to itself a searching test of one's thoughts and feelings, especially so when the very language of the petition, as suggested by the Divine Spirit, holds up a mirror to the heart. The following story well illustrates some of the difficulties experienced by an intentional sinner in repeating the Lord's prayer:

In the middle ages, when the great lords and knights were always at war with each other, one of them resolved to avenge himself upon a neighbour who had offended him. It chanced that on the very evening when he had made this resolution he heard that his enemy was to pass near his castle with only a few men with him. It was a good opportunity to take his revenge, and he determined not to let it pass. He spoke of this plan in the presence of his chaplain, who tried in vain to persuade him to give it up. The good man said a great deal to the duke about the sin of what he was going to do, but in vain. At length seeing that all his words had no effect, he said, "My Lord, since I cannot persuade you to give up this plan of yours, will you at least consent to come with me to the chapel, that we may pray together before you go?" The duke consented, and the chaplain and he knelt together in prayer. Then the merciful Christian said to the revengeful warrior, "Will you repeat after me, sentence by sentence, the prayer which our Lord Jesus Christ taught to his disciples?"

"I will do it," replied the duke.

He did it accordingly. The chaplain said a sentence, and the duke repeated it till he came to the petition, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." There the duke was silent.

"My lord duke you are silent," said the chaplain. "Will you be so good as

to continue to repeat the words after me, if you dare say so!—"forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us."

"I cannot," replied the duke.

"Well, God cannot forgive you, for he has said so. He himself has given this prayer. Therefore, you must either give up your revenge, or give up saying this prayer; for, to ask God to pardon you as you pardon others, is to ask him to take vengeance on you for all your sins. Go, now, my Lord, and meet your victim. God will meet you at the great day of judgment.

The iron will of the duke was broken.

"No," said he, "I will finish my prayer: My God, my Father, pardon me. Forgive me, as I desire to forgive him who has offended me. Lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from evil!"

"Amen!" said the chaplain.

"Amen!" repeated the duke, who now understood the Lord's Prayer better than he had ever done before, since he had learned to apply it to himself.—*Biblical Treasury.*

THE SPARK AND THE FLAME.

"Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth."—James iii. 5.

As I was travelling by the railway last summer, I observed the green banks on the side of the way in some places marked with large patches of black, scorched, and burnt grass. This was caused by sparks flying from the engine. That little spark—see, it falls on that tuft; the grass is dry, and it has set that tuft on fire,—that tuft blazes and sets the next on fire, and the next, and the next. See how it spreads! all the bank is now in a blaze. So I have known a word—a spiteful word, a false word, a wicked word—to kindle a fire that has spread and destroyed the happiness of many. The mischief has gone on from one person to another, from family to family, and even from nation to nation. In America, where there are large plains covered with long dry grass, sometimes through carelessness the grass has taken fire. How dreadful—the prairie is on fire! it spreads for miles, the beasts fleeing before it, and men, women, and chil-

dran, having lost house and home, are glad to escape with their lives.

Some of you have seen in the city of London, just by London Bridge, a very high column. It is called the Monument, and was built in memory of a dreadful fire which took place about two hundred years ago. One Sunday morning before it was light, a citizen looked out at his window and saw a fire, just on the spot where that monument stands. He did not think much of it, and went to bed again. But it was soon found to be spreading. It went on for three days and nights, burning its way through the city, house after house, street after street, lighting up the sky for miles all round the country. It is stated that thirteen thousand houses, eighty-nine churches, besides the city gates and the public buildings, were destroyed in those three days. One writer informs us that the people, who had been driven from their houses to the number of two hundred thousand, were seen by him out in the fields at Islington and Highgate, destitute of everything. And all this from that small beginning, "Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" When you kindle it you know not where it will end. A spark let fall upon a portion of tinder may be the commencement of a fire that may destroy a city.

So it is with a little word. A little angry word makes other people angry, and so it spreads. Oh, thou little tongue, what mischief hast thou done!—by false words, like Gehazi's, or like those of Ababi's false prophets; slanderous words, like those of Shimei—*cursing and swearing words*. The apostle James has some awful warnings. He says the tongue "setteth on fire the course of nature, and is set on fire of hell."

I might tell you of the mischief Doeg the Edomite did; and the false witnesses against Stephen; and the young men that mocked the prophet; and the spiteful words of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Oh, it is kind of the apostle James to tell us that we must put a bridle on the tongue! You see the unruly horse, he will go the wrong way without restraint, and do great mischief; but his master holds him back with a firm hand. So

must we when the tongue is just ready to say some foolish, or vain, or false, or spiteful words; we must hold it back with a firm hand, and say "No, no, unruly tongue, back, back!"

But the true cure for a bad tongue is curing the heart. The heart is the fountain; the streams of evil words come from the bad thoughts that work within. We must ask God to forgive us the sins of the tongue, and all other sins, for Christ's sake, and ask Him to cleanse our hearts and our ways. We must set before us the example of Him "who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth. Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not, but committed Himself to Him who judgeth righteously."—*Union Magazine*.

LIVING TO PURPOSE.

I took up an old book the other day, and glancing over the preface my eye caught these words, "MY DESIRE HAS BEEN TO LIVE TO PURPOSE." I immediately felt that I had met with one with whom I could sympathise. Live we do, live we must; it is not a matter of choice with us; but, do we live to purpose? Is the life we are living worthy an immortal soul? Is it becoming a probationer for eternity? What is our aim? What will be the end of our life? My soul, see to it that you live to purpose.

Reader, let me exhort you to live to purpose. Live while you live. Live as you will wish you had lived when the glories of eternity are bursting upon your view.

If we would live to purpose, we must live a *life of faith*. Faith brings us to Jesus, leads us to renounce everything at the feet of Jesus, and to venture on Jesus to save us with an everlasting salvation. Faith takes the promise of God, and trusts it; the precept of Christ and obeys it. Faith rests upon God's word, watches God's providence, and strives to glorify God's name. If I have faith, I have Jesus; for faith brings the soul and Christ into union. If I have faith, I am holy; for faith purifies the heart, works by love, and consecrates the person to God. If there is no faith, there can be no good works; and if there are no good works, there is no faith; or, if there is what is called faith, it is a dead, a useless faith, for "faith without works is dead, being alone." To live by faith, then, is to live believing God, trusting in Jesus,

doing the will of God from the heart, and seeking to do good to all around us.

If we would live to purpose, we must live a *life of prayer*. Prayer is the outgoing of the soul to God, as the effect of communications of grace from God. Prayer eases the heart, relieves the mind, and animates the soul. It seeks from God, that it may employ for God. Without prayer there can be no life in the soul. Without habitual prayer there can be no spiritual health. Prayer brings God and the soul together. It opens God's resources to supply the pleader's needs. Prayer, as it brings us constantly into the presence of God, gradually conforms us to the moral image of God. We become God-like. There is a resemblance to God in our spirit, object, and actions. And, as it is impossible to be like God and not live to purpose, so it is impossible to live to purpose if we are not like God. The man of faith is the man of prayer; and the man of prayer is the useful man.

If we would live to purpose, we must live a *life of activity*. We must be active for God's glory, and active for man's good.—There is a field for every one to cultivate—a work for each to do. The men of the last generation, who planted the fruit trees which now supply us, lived to some purpose; but the men who only lived to eat, drink, and dress, lived to no purpose.

Reader, do you wish to live to purpose? If so, live to Jesus. Live for Jesus. Live like Jesus. He went about doing good. He pleased not Himself, but in everything sought the good of others, and His Father's glory. How can Christians endure the thought of living to no purpose? Dying, the church scarcely misses them. Dying, the world is scarcely any the worse for their removal. Dying, the Saviour has not lost a trumpeter, nor the Sunday school a teacher, nor the church an active instrument of good.

Brethren, let us arouse ourselves; let us determine, in God's strength, that we will henceforth live to some high, holy, and noble purpose. As the apostle said of himself and primitive Christians, let us so live as to say of ourselves, "None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself; for if we live, we live unto the Lord; and if we die, we die unto the Lord; living therefore, or dying, we are the Lord's." Gracious God, grant that the ruling desire of every one of our hearts may be, that, when the scenes of life close upon us—when eternity opens before us—when death stands ready to usher us into thy presence—we may be enabled honestly to say, "MY DESIRE HAS BEEN TO LIVE TO PURPOSE."—*Late Rev. James Smith*,

FOOTSTEPS.

"Leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps."—1 Pet. ii. 21.

One day in the winter, when the ground was covered with snow, the parents of little Mary saw on the ground little footsteps; they traced the marks along in the snow till they came to an old barn; and so they found that their little darling had been to that barn soon in the morning.—What did she go to the barn for? She had read in the word of God, "Enter into thy closet, and, when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret." She knew that a closet meant some closed-up place where she might be alone, and, as she could not find a place to be alone in the house, she went out into the barn and shut the door, to be alone with God. I wish all young persons would tread in her steps. I do not mean exactly that you should take some snowy morning and walk in the snow.—But I mean that you should every morning, summer and winter, come to your little closet. A barn will do, a bedroom will do, anywhere that you can be alone to pray unto your "Father that seeth in secret."

But we have a better example, an example that will serve us in everything.—There is One who has walked upon this earth and is gone to heaven, who desires that you, dear young ones, should go to the same place; and so He has left His footsteps for you. See: put your feet in the same steps and you will arrive where Jesus is. These footsteps are traced in the New Testament. Let us look for them.

I. The first of these footsteps is HUMILITY. You never see pride or vanity, haughtiness or envy, in Him. He was the meek and lowly One. He says, "Learn of me." One day his disciples, as they walked, were talking about a question that often comes uppermost in most minds,—*Who should be the greatest?* When the walk was at an end, Jesus asked them what they had been talking about on the way. Almost ashamed, they told Him; when He took a little child, set him in the midst, and bade them look at that child. I think it was a sweet child: very lovely,

because humble. It did not despise others whose clothes were not so good. It did not strive to get the best place. It felt itself to need instruction and support, and looked up in its weakness into the Saviour's loving face, as if asking Him to take care of it. It was humble like Jesus himself, lowly and meek. Such would Jesus have His disciples to be. That is the first of Christ's footsteps.

II. The next footstep is LOVE. Love brought Him from heaven to earth, and love in the heart will carry us from earth to heaven. Heaven is the world of love, and love is one of His footsteps. Happy is he that treads therein.

III. Another footstep is OBEDIENCE.—When a boy, His parents found Him in the temple, and He said, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" and then He went home and was subject to His earthly parents. He said, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work." Every step of His life was one of obedience.

"My dear Redeemer and my Lord,
I read my duty in Thy word;
But in Thy life the law appears
Drawn out in living characters.
Such was Thy truth, and such Thy zeal,
Such deference to Thy Father's will,
Such love and meekness so divine,
I would transcribe and make them mine."

IV. I will mention one other footstep of Jesus which claims especial attention. It is difficult to step here, but if you follow Jesus, you will mark His steps of SELF-DENIAL. Mocked, derided, beaten, crowned with thorns, crucified, His disciples trod in His steps. And shall we repine because of the little self-denial that is required of us! Let every one say,—
"Blessed Jesus."

"Be Thou my pattern; make me bear
More of Thy gracious image here,
Then God the Judge shall own my name
Among the followers of the Lamb."

INCONSTANCY.—Be not unstable in thy resolutions, not various in thy actions, nor inconstant in thy affections. So deliberate that thou mayest persevere, Mutability is the badge of infirmity.

PEACEMAKERS.

The opening sentences of our Lord's Sermon upon the Mount, known in the Church by the name of the Beatitudes, give us a delineation of the saintly character. We shall misunderstand these Divine sentences if we suppose that we find in them so many different classes of saintly men. It is not that the poor in spirit form one division, and that the mourners a second, and the meek a third, and they which hunger and thirst after righteousness a fourth, and the merciful a fifth, and the pure in heart a sixth, and the peacemakers a seventh, and the persecuted an eighth; all the saints of God have that true Gospel poverty of spirit which Bishop Taylor calls "the highway of eternity;" all mourn; all are meek; all hunger and thirst after righteousness; all are merciful; all are pure in heart; all are peacemakers; all, more or less, are persecuted for righteousness' sake. We have not so many different kinds of characters; but so many aspects of one and the same character, not eight different vines, but eight different clusters of one and the same vine.

It is an easy thing to speak about the saints and the saintly characters, admiring them as we might admire the radiance of an autumnal sunset: but we are all called to be saints; unless that character be formed in us, we shall have no share in the beatitudes of the Sermon upon the Mount. Let us consider that aspect of the saintly character which is exhibited in the words, "Blessed are the peacemakers."

1. Who are the peacemakers?

If we inquire merely what our Lord's first hearers must have understood by the term, no doubt it may be restricted to the signification which has been given by an old divine—"pacific, gentle, good-natured."

Even in this obvious and superficial sense of the word there is much force. How strangely and touchingly gentle must it have sounded in the ears of men in that age, which has been described by historians in hues of such intense blackness! Even now, after the Gospel of Christ has been eighteen hundred years in this distracted world, we cannot afford to do with-

out this signification of the seventh beatitude. When we look round us, are there not quarrels in houses, quarrels in societies, quarrels even in churches, between those who are only divided by some wretched shibboleth? When men see how good a thing it is to drop a little oil upon these troubled waters, even worldly hearts are ready to say "Amen" to the Saviour's blessing.

It is interesting to remember that at the last commission for the review of the Liturgy, in 1689, it was proposed, among several changes of a much more questionable character, that at the greater festivals the Eight Beatitudes should be read, either in addition to, or in place of, the Ten Commandments. On a Christmas or Easter morning it would surely be beautiful to hear, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God," with a response, "Lord, have mercy upon us, and make us partakers of this blessing."

But this does not exhaust the meaning. The world is, for once, so well pleased with the literal interpretation of one of the words of Jesus, that it would see no further. Not so the Christian. Rather, as one of old has said, "from the promontory of the Saviour's words he gazes down into the clear and fathomless depths of his Divine thought."

When we read any thoughtful book, we strive to ascertain the sense in which the author uses important words. What, then, does Christ mean by peace?

Peace seems to mean a wholesome and perfect harmony of man's nature. Man has a twofold enmity rankling in his soul. He is the enemy of God. When we remember the heathen philosopher's description of a wicked man—how he cannot bear to be alone, because he can find nothing in himself to love; how his whole soul is in a state of revolt and mutiny—we need not fear to say that he is at enmity with himself.

Our Lord says, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you." The world's courteous words are hollow. It can speak them with curled lips, and a tongue of ice, and an eye of stone. But the word which the world uses heartlessly

is taken up by our loving Lord, and by him transfigured and glorified into its highest sense.

Here, then, are Christ's peacemakers. Not merely the pacific—that would be but a repetition of the previous blessing upon the meek—but the pacificators; not merely those who have peace, but those who make it. They are those who first have this peace themselves, then diffuse it among others, whether with a ministerial commission or not; whether with conscious devotion to sacred work, or as the half-unconscious missionaries of Christ.

Let us note, before passing on, that this aspect of the saintly character is not inconsistent with witness against evil and rebuke of sin. We need to see this in our age. No peace, which is true peace, can be wider than God's. No love, which is true love, can be tenderer than God's. We have learned to make our disputes impersonal, to define and explain, until controversy becomes superfluous or hopeless. It is well. Let us only remember that there are times when, in aiming at the higher peace, we must be content to sacrifice the lower. Elijah and Athanasius were peacemakers after all.

It should be noticed that this false peacemaking with sin and evil has infected language. Time was when language, with its salutary roughness, was a great moral educator, because it taught us, almost without reflection, to place our likings and aversions rightly. Many instances might be alleged. For instance, scepticism is called strength of thought. Strength! Scepticism may be stronger than indifference: it is weaker than faith. Man is strong, not by what he knows, but by what he believes. Again, excess of passion is confounded with strength of character. But the force of passion, as has been well said, is organic, not moral; and the measure of strength is precisely resistance, not submission, to passion.

II. It is interesting to note the special suitability of the promise annexed to this blessing.

There is a beautiful peculiarity about the promises of Christ. They are not rhetorical or poetical. There is a close connection between our circumstances, our trials, our temptations, our wants, and

the promises held out to us. Read the promises to the seven churches, in the second and third chapters of the Apocalypse, by the light of this hint.

So in the beatitudes. It is meet that the poor in spirit should have the riches of the kingdom; it is meet that the mourners should have their tears wiped away by a pierced hand; it is meet that they who have been pushed and jostled aside in the rude world's selfish throng, who have not enjoyed the old earth, should inherit the new earth; it is meet that they who have yearned with a deep and deathless hunger and thirst after the Lord our Righteousness should be satisfied; it is meet that they who have shown mercy to others should obtain it themselves; it is meet that the pure in heart, who have made a covenant with their eyes, and turned them away from forbidden objects, should gaze for ever upon the ancient and uncreated Beauty, the first and only Fair. There is, therefore, a special meetness in this promise also—"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."

Who is the Peacemaker? He at whose birth the angels sang, "Peace on earth." He who is our peace. He is so because he is the Son of God, whose property it is to unite the divided and reconcile the fallen.

It was a glorious scene in the midst of which these words were spoken, under the cloudless splendour of a southern dawn. There shall be a fairer scene, the flushing of a more unclouded morning, "the manifestation of the sons of God." Then he shall appear as the Peacemaker; they, in his likeness, who have been peacemakers. He, the Son of God; they the sons of God through the power which he has given them.

If we be not Sadducees in disguise, calling ourselves Christians, there are times when the eye of faith pierces the sunlit mists, and we see the forms of saints and martyrs thronging the eternal hills—not in any superstitious spirit, as those whom we must pray to, or need pray for; not merely those of whom we read in history, but saints whose names are written in the calendar of home; martyrs who have borne wearing sickness or the cruel knife with

such heavenly patience, that at last we seem to hear our loving Father's voice calling them from life's long weariness to that eternal rest?

Do we not see now that they all, in one way or other, have been Christ's peacemakers? And how shall we follow them? Not by wild fanaticism; not by striving, and crying, and making our voice heard in the street; not by leaving (without a special call) the commonplace duties of our home. Let us first receive Christ's peace into our hearts. It will be as an aromatic odour, which is wafted beyond the wrapper in which it is enfolded, and manifests its presence by a sweetness which cannot be hidden.—*Quiver.*

THE PRODIGAL RECLAIMED.

A Christian minister entered a railway-carriage in which he found two passengers already seated. One of them was a sailor, about thirty years of age, whose bronzed, weather-beaten countenance told plainly of exposure and hard work in different climes. The other was a lady.

The sailor's heart was evidently full of some great joy; for as though unconscious of the presence of others, he repeated several times the words, "Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!"

After a little time the lady turned to him and said, "I think you have surely been amongst Ranters, or some people of that sort, who have turned your brain."

"No, ma'am," said he, "I've been out of my senses all my life; but, thank God, I've just come to my right mind."

The lady looked somewhat incredulous, and for a little time nothing more was spoken.

After a while the minister drew a little nearer and said to the sailor, "My friend, if you have no objection, I should like to know a little of your history."

Thus accosted, the man replied in substance as follows:—

"It is now more than fifteen years since I left home to go to sea. My native place is——, and my mother was a widow, a good woman as ever lived, and she tried to train me up right, and I am sure she prayed for me with all her heart. She

took me with her to the house of God, and sent me to the Sunday school held there. I had a good kind teacher, who often spoke to me and the rest of the class very earnestly, and exhorted us to believe in the Lord Jesus, and to love him. But I paid no heed to the advice of either my mother or my teacher, and grew wild and reckless, and when I had been apprenticed about two years, I ran away from my master and from home and went to sea.

"Since then, I have been nearly all over the world. I have been in many ships and ports, but everywhere I have been a wicked prodigal. The last ship I sailed in came into the Thames not long since, and I landed with the resolve to give myself to indulgence and wickedness.

"One summer evening, accompanied by some of my shipmates, I passed a chapel for seamen, from which there came the sound of singing. It recalled to me in an instant the days of my youth, and all the wickedness of my life since then. I stood in the street riveted, and I felt as if the earth would surely open and swallow me up. My shipmates wanted to hurry me on; but I felt as if I could not but go into the chapel, and I did so, alone, for none of them would go in with me. There was a prayer-meeting. The prayers and the singing had a great effect on me; and I went back to the ship full of anxiety about my soul. I could get no rest, and so I resolved to go to the same place again the first opportunity. I went the very next Sunday evening. There was a minister who preached from the words, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." Towards the end of his sermon, he said, "Is there any poor sailor here that feels himself a sinner? The faithful saying is for him: the Lord Jesus is willing to save him, and to save him now." I could not help crying out, "Yes, Jack's here!" I listened to the end; some kind friends talked to me and prayed for me, and I found peace in the Lord Jesus Christ."

The minister gave a glance at the lady, and observed that her eyes had filled with tears. She had no idea now that the sailor's brain was turned.

"And what are you going to do now?" asked the minister.

"As soon as I found peace in Jesus, and felt his love, I resolved to go and see my mother, and tell her about it. I had another ship offered me, and I could have sailed directly; but I said, "No, I must go and see my mother!"

He had not seen her for many years, nor had he heard from her. He hoped to find her alive; though for aught he knew she might be dead; but at all events he would go and see, that if still living he might beg her forgiveness and gladden her heart by the news of his conversion.

Christian parents, sow the good seed, and sow it hopefully. It may spring up and bring forth fruit abundantly very soon, and you may have the joy of seeing your children walking with you in the way to heaven, whilst yet young. But if not, do not despair. The seed may be covered long, and bring forth fruit at last. It may be hidden deep down in the heart of your wayward and rebellious son; but in answer to your prayers God may yet quicken it into life, and give you to rejoice in his conversion. Do not despair, although you should not hear of it on earth, you may meet him in heaven.

DIVINE EJACULATION.

Great God, whose sceptra rules the earth,
Distil thy fear into my heart,
That, being rapt with holy mirth,
I may proclaim how good thou art:
Open my lips, that I may sing
Full praises to my God, my King.

Great God, thy garden is defaced,
The weeds thrive there, thy flowers decay;
O call to mind thy promise past,
Restore thou them, cut these away:
Till then let not the weeds have power
To starve or stunt the poorest flower.

In all extremes, Lord, thou art still
The mount whereto my hopes do flee;
O make my soul detest all ill,
Because so much abhorr'd by thee:
Lord, let thy gracious trials show
That I am just, or make me so.

Shall mountain, desert, beast, and tree,
Yield to that heavenly voice of thine,
And shall that voice not startle me,
Nor stir this stone—this heart of mine?
No, Lord, till thou new-bore mine ear,
Thy voice is lost, I cannot hear.

Fountain of light and living breath,

Whose mercies never fail nor fade,
Fill me with life that hath no death,
Fill me with light that hath no shade;
Appoint the remnant of my days
To see thy power, and sing thy praise.

Lord God of gods, before whose throne
Stand storms and fire, O what shall we
Return to Heaven, that is our own,
When all the world belongs to thee?
We have no offering to impart,
But praises, and a wounded heart.

O Thou that sitt'st in heaven, and seest
My deeds without, my thoughts within,
Be thou my Prince, be thou my Priest—
Command my soul, and cure my sin:
How bitter my affections be
I care not, so I rise to thee.

What I possess, or what I crave,
Brings us content, great God, to me,
If what I would, or what I have,
Be not possess'd and blest in thee:
What I enjoy, oh, make it mine,
In making me, that have it, thine.

When winter-fortunes cloud the brows
Of summer friends; when eyes grow
strange—
When plighted faith forgets its vows—
When earth and all things in it change,—
O Lord, thy mercies fail me never:
When once thou lov'st, thou lov'st for ever.

Great God, whose kingdom hath no end,
Into whose secrets none can dive,
Whose mercy none can apprehend,
Whose justice none can feel—and live;
What my dull heart cannot aspire
To know, Lord, teach me to admire.

CHARLES.

"He that received seed unto the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it."—Matthew xiii. 23.

A poor woman once heard a sermon in which the use of dishonest weights and measures was exposed. She went home much affected by the preacher's words. The next day, when, according to his custom the minister went among his hearers, and called upon the woman, he took occasion to ask her what she remembered of his sermon. The poor woman complained much of her bad memory, and said she had forgotten almost all that he delivered. "But one thing," said she, "I remembered; I remembered to burn my bushel."

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