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THE CANADIAN INDEPENDENT.

(NEW SERIES.)

Vol. I.]

TORONTO, MAY, 1882.

[No. 5.]

EDITORIAL JOTTINGS.

WE quote the following as an example of several letters received:—"I am well pleased with the INDEPENDENT in its monthly form and its splendid contents. The notes on the Sunday-school lessons are a great help to us. The prize questions have started up our young people to search the Scriptures." We can appreciate kind words, and trust our friends will endeavour to increase our list of subscribers, which will enable us to do still better with our monthly. Introduce it to our schools.

A RATHER extraordinary article appears in the April *Century Magazine* upon the Jews in Russia, written from a Russian point of view. The writer, a Russian lady, maintains that the prejudice and active animosity manifested against the Jews is not due to religious prejudice, the hatred manifested being against the people and that people's religion, not against the religion first and then its adherents. This is supported by the fact that Mahometan Tartars are not merely tolerated, but live on equal and friendly terms with their orthodox neighbours, whilst periodically there is a rising against the accursed Jew.

Jacob Braffman, a Jew who has risen to a literary post in a Russian University, has gathered together, and in part published, some curious evidence regarding the rules which from among themselves regulate the course and relations of Jewish communities, and which throw light upon the prejudice which evidently is deeply rooted and widespread against the race. We cannot forget, as we speak of prejudice widespread, how our own great dramatist, Shakspeare, has limned "Shylock" in the only attempt he has made to picture Jewish character. A Jewish community is said to be ruled by an administrative community, whose regulations are enforced and tolls

collected under pain of excommunication, under which the excommunicated man is a social outcast from his people; and a circular addressed to the "wise men and elders of the nation" everywhere makes the curse virtually universal. This has a public significance; for a sentence in the Talmud declares "the property of Gentiles to be even as a waste, free to all"—i.e., the rights of Gentile ownership are of no value as against the Jews' universal claim. One of the Rabbis compares Gentile property to a lake, free to all—i.e., Jews; but the Jew must regard the rights of his brother Jew, which rights are defined by the administrative council, or Kahal. Thus the Gentile possessions are farmed out—e.g., an individual or a house is the exclusive property (in the Jewish sense) of an individual Jew, who thus acquires the sole right to the profits that can be made by him as money-lender, or in any other mode possible to him, his brother Jews, of course, assisting therein. In Russia they have succeeded in securing not only the money-lending trade, but the butcher business, and interpret Deut. xiv. 21 so as to relieve them from all conscience in the character of the meat provided for the alien. Thus by their compact organization, their faithfulness to each other and utter want of faith within legal limits in their dealings with the Gentiles, they incur the hatred as they excite the dread of a people whose opportunities for dispassionate judgment are very limited. "Therefore," writes Mme. L. Ragozin, "are the Jews disliked, nay hated, in those parts, not because they believe and pray differently, but because they are a parasitical race, who, producing nothing, fasten on the produce of land and labour, and live on it, choking the breath of life out of commerce and industry as sure as the creeper throttles the tree that upholds it. They are despised, not because they are of different blood, because they dress differently, eat pe-

cular food; not even because, herding together in unutterable filth and squalor, they are a loathsome and really dangerous element—a standing institution for the propagation of all kinds of horrible diseases and contagions; but because their ways are crooked, their manner abject—because they will not stand up for themselves and manfully resent an insult or oppose vexation, but will take any amount of it if they can thereby turn a penny, will smirk and cringe, and go off with a deadly grudge at heart, which they will vent cruelly, ruthlessly, but in an underhand manner, and not always on the offender, but on any or all belonging to the offender's race. They are not 'persecuted.' Only, from time to time, the popular patience—that dyke built up of ignorance, apathy, and habitual endurance—breaks: then there is an outpouring of angry waters. True, some things have become impossible. No invading conqueror, for instance, would dream nowadays of farming to the Jews *the churches* of a conquered people, as did the Poles when they held Galicia, in the sixteenth century and later, thus authorizing them to tax the people arbitrarily for having divine service performed in their own temples. No Government would now lend itself to such iniquity. Still, we have just seen that, even without such open support, enough can be achieved to exasperate the most long-suffering people and goad them into momentary frenzy."

This, of course, is one side of the question. It may be a matter of inquiry how far the treatment they have received from so-called Christian nations may not have at least intensified the unlovely traits their character manifests. But we will not anticipate a promised rejoinder, by a Jewess, in the next number.

APROPPOS to this are the following remarks from our London contemporary, the *Outlook*:—"Much has been said and written recently about the possibility of the Jews being restored to Palestine. The outrages to which they have been submitted in Russia and Germany has had the effect of causing the question to be earnestly discussed; and thoughtful men like Mr. Lawrence Oliphant, have given utterance to very decided views in the matter. To all who take an interest in this ancient people, the plan must have elements of fascination, however impracticable it may appear. And for good or for ill, the unpractical aspect of the matter is increased by the

changes of opinion and of feeling which have come over the Jews themselves—changes of opinion and of feeling which characterize both progressive and conservative Jews, and which, though of very different characters, have yet the same effect, and render them disinclined to favour such a movement. The orthodox party, who retain their hope of the coming Messiah, either do not look to Palestine as the place, or else do not regard this as the time when He will gather His people. The liberal, or reform wing of the nation, on the other hand, have, for the most part, abandoned the old Jewish expectation. They believe in no Messiah other than the Truth—a spiritual incarnation in Divine Ideas and Words to be carried to the nations. And this incarnation they believe they have, and are opposed to their consolidation in any one place, regarding themselves as testimony-bearers—if they do so recognize themselves at all—the more efficient from the very circumstance of dispersion among all peoples. The great difficulty thus rests with the opinions and the feelings of the Jews themselves."

THE monument which Her Majesty ordered for the perpetuation of the memory of Lord Beaconsfield has just been erected in Hughenden church. It is placed above the seat occupied by the late Prime Minister. The centre of the memorial is occupied by a profile portrait carved in low relief in statuary marble, placed within a quatrefoil cartouch, which is flanked by buttresses and crowned by a carved and crested canopy in which figures an heraldic hatchment of the late earl's arms and supporters. Beneath this is a tablet bearing the following dedication, penned by the Queen herself:—

To
the dear and honoured Memory
of BENJAMIN, EARL OF BEACONSFIELD.

This Memorial is placed by
his grateful and affectionate
Sovereign and friend,
Victoria R. I.

"Kings love him that
speaketh right."

Proverbs xvi. 13.

February 27, 1882.

One cannot fail to respect the friendship of our widowed Queen towards her late Prime Minister—a friendship rare between Sovereign and subject. Within that sacred line we would not intrude. We, however, must feel that in view of "scientific frontiers," "Zulu

wars." *et omne hoc genus*, the estimate of a writer in *The Century*, on Lord Beaconsfield as a representative Jew, is correct:—

"And yet the fact remains that Disraeli was not a first-class man. His qualities were not those of the world's heroes; he possessed talent rather than genius; he was a sagacious politician aiming at self-aggrandizement, not a wise statesman building his monument in enduring acts of public service; and the study of his career is calculated to dazzle, to entertain, even to amuse, rather than to elevate, to stimulate, or to ennoble."

THE Census returns are gradually coming to light. The following religious aspect of the same will have its interest for us. The increase of population for the entire Dominion is estimated at twenty-five per cent. for the last ten years, the city of Toronto's increase during the same period being fifty-four per cent. We as a denomination appear as holding our own; is it possible to do more?—

Rank in 1881.	Denomination.	1881.	1871.	Rank in 1871.
1	Roman Catholics	1,791,982	1,492,029	1
2	METHODISTS	742,981	549,499	2
	Church of Canada	582,963		
	Episcopal	103,272		
	Bible Christian	27,236		
	Primitive	25,680		
	Other Methodists	3,830		
3	PRESBYTERIANS	676,165	544,998	3
	Church in Canada	629,280		
	Church of Scotland	32,834		
	Reformed	12,945		
	Other	1,105		
4	Church of England	574,818	491,049	4
5	BAPTISTS	296,525	239,343	5
	Baptists	225,236		
	Free Will	50,055		
	Tunkers (Mennonites)	21,234		
6	Lutherans	46,350	37,935	6
7	Congregationalists	26,900	21,829	7
8	Disciples	20,193		
9	Adventists	7,211	6,179	9
10	Quakers	6,553	7,345	8
	Protestant	6,519	10,145	
11	Universalists	4,517	4,896	11
12	Pagan	4,478	1,886	13
13	No religion	2,634	5,575	10
14	Episcopal Reformed	2,596		
15	Jews	2,393	1,115	14
16	Unitarians	2,126	2,275	12
	Other denominations	12,500	17,977	
	Not given	86,769	17,055	

From this table it will be seen that over the whole Dominion there has not been any change in the numerical rank of the denominations. The increase, however, made by the chief denominations is as follows:—

	Per cent.
Roman Catholics	21
Methodists	35
Presbyterians	24
Church of England	16½
Baptists	24
Congregationalists	22
Increase of population over whole country	25

CITY OF TORONTO.				
Rank in 1881.	Denomination.	1881.	1871.	Rank in 1871.
1.	Church of England	30,913	20,668	1
2.	METHODISTS	16,358	9,596	3
	Church of Canada	15,246		
	Episcopal	92		
	Bible Christian	204		
	Primitive	810		
3	Roman Catholics	15,716	11,981	2
4	Presbyterians	14,612	8,982	4
5	Baptists	3,667	1,953	5
6	Congregationalists	2,018	1,185	6
7	Jews	534	157	14
8	Lutherans	494	343	7
9	Brethren	419	324	8
10	Disciples	312		
11	Unitarians	255	270	9
12	Episcopal Reformed	96		
13	No religion	59	66	10
14	Quakers	57	23	11
	Protestant	36	13	
15	Universalist	6	12	13
16	Adventists	3	21	12
	Other denominations	387	255	
	Not given	474	108	

The percentage of increase made by some of the denominations in the city as compared with the growth of the city's population is as follows:—

	Per cent.
Church of England	49
Methodists	73½
Roman Catholics	32½
Presbyterians	62½
Baptists	88
Congregationalists	70
Increase of city population	54

We have not yet seen an analysis of other cities, but should they show an increased percentage over the general twenty-two per cent. in the Dominion, as Toronto has done, we as a denomination shall be called upon to face the fact that in the rural districts we are losing ground, which means that our base of supply is being wasted. Our future missionary operations must, if they are to be successful, be carried on with a firm grasp of this fact. We ought not to neglect the country.

REV. B. NOTT, late of Barnstaple, Eng., who brings a transfer letter from the Con. Union of North Devon, is at present without charge. His address is, "care of Mr. G. L. Nott, Oshawa."

THE Afghanistan war the other day cost the British taxpayers \$120,000,000. Careful statisticians estimate the cost of the six great wars among the so-called Christian nations, within the last twenty-five years, at \$15,000,000,000, to say nothing of the 2,000,000 of men whose lives were a part of the price. There are now in Europe nearly 13,000,000 of trained soldiers. Between four and five millions of these are actually under arms, and cost something like \$2,500,000,000 per year. These figures make no allowance for ammunition, arms, etc., and ironclads. The cost of one of the latter would start five and twenty large factories. Nor is there anything added for the enormous loss of the productive labour of all these millions of able-bodied men. Such are a few of the facts mentioned by Mr. Henry Richard, in a recent speech at Leeds, in connection with a Peace and Arbitration Congress.

ANOTHER of the old residents of this city has passed away. Henry James Grasett, D.D., Rector of St. James' Cathedral and Anglican Dean of Toronto, died peacefully, aged seventy-three, on the 20th March last. For forty-seven years he had ministered to the congregation in whose service he died. We have heard it stated that since his pastorate began, every church building in the city has been erected. Evangelical, firm, peaceful, he won the esteem of all, and "reaped the harvest of the quiet eye, doing his duty without parade, and entering into rest." All classes and orders joined in paying the last tribute of respect to the departed friend. He was buried in the chancel of the cathedral, near to his venerated friend, the late Bishop Strachan.

IN the year A.D. 1500, Protestantism was not as an organized power. March 16th, 1517, the closing session of the last Lateran Council, the closing bull announcing the accomplishment of every object. Schism had been healed, peace restored to the Christian world, which all lay humble at the foot of the Papal throne, awaiting its blessing! On the 31st October, that same year, Luther's hammer rang upon the nails which fastened to the church door of Wittenberg his challenge to the Papal power. At that time, of the 100,000,000 who owed allegiance to Chris-

tian rulers, 80,000,000 were under the Papal rule; the remainder chiefly owned the Patriarch of the Greek Church. In A.D. 1700, the Roman Catholic peoples had increased to 90,000,000, the Eastern Christians to 33,000,000; whilst owning Protestant supremacy were numbered 32,000,000, or about one-fifth of nominal Christian people. In 1800, there were under Protestant Governments, 194,000,000; under Papal, 134,000,000; and under Governments owning the Greek Church, 60,000,000. In 1876 the record stands as follows:—Under Governments professedly Roman Catholic, 181,000,000; Greek Church, 96,000,000; and under rule professedly Protestant, 408,000,000. It need not be explained that these numbers are far from representing the truly religious conviction of the many; but they manifest the unmistakable drift of progress, and should act as incentives to Christian zeal. State Churches are fast becoming facts of history. None the less need, however, is there that the Free Churches should make manifest the blessings of freedom by using their liberty to evangelize the world—preaching the Gospel to every creature. Government is given not for self-aggrandizement, but that all may be brought to His feet whom believers delight to own as Lord of all:—

"Gar field is the world, whether sowing or reaping,
Or gleaning the handfuls that others have passed.
Or waiting the growth of the seed that with weeping,
On rocky and desolate plains we have cast;
Yet each for his toiling, and each for his mourning,
Shall some time rejoice when the harvest is won,
And know, in the flush of eternity's morning,
That the toil, the reward, and the glory are one."

THE subject of the non-church-going population is eliciting considerable discussion and deepening interest among Christian workers in the old land, and will be for us a rapidly pressing question. Dr. Thain Davidson, in an article in the *London Christian Monthly*, draws attention to a fact which is deeply suggestive, and which may well startle some of us as we ponder. We constantly hear the expression regarding the Sabbath-school, "the nursery of the Church." Let us hear what Dr. Davidson says: "I do not think that the Church of Christ in this country sufficiently realizes the signal failure, *as regards one point*, of our whole Sabbath-school organization. When we compare the published statistics as to the proportion of the population

who, during the last twenty years, have passed through Sunday-schools, with the recent returns as to non-church-goers, we are brought face to face with the fact that tens and hundreds of thousands, who in their early years received such religious education, never realize the obligation or the privilege of waiting on the public ministry of the Word. It is not for me to suggest where the responsibility or the blame lies. But there is evidently here a call for diligent inquiry. That we are feeling this is evident from the question earnestly and constantly propounded—how to guide the stream of Sunday-school life into the church, and keep the youth from drifting into the world." To us the reason is not far to seek. How practically to remove the difficulty, considering the strength of vested rights, is a problem the solution of which is not yet. Practically, (and in many cases the practice is but the expression of an avowed theory,) the school is made not a part of Church work and life, but a separate organization, whose only points of contact with a church are the walls which bind the two buildings together, and the accident that most of the workers have made that particular church their home. There is no concerted aim to bring up the scholars in a definite church life; and lest some sectarian and therefore tender conscience should be aggrieved, anything that may savour of a particular church life is religiously eschewed; hence, a formless instruction is too often imparted; and the school that shrinks from stamping its individuality upon its teachings, succeeds in training the children up into an evangelical nothingarianism, from which they very naturally slip into a worldly anythingism and are lost to legitimate church work and life. We enter no plea for proselytism, which we detest, nor for narrow theological lines, but we utter our decided protest against writing evangelical *evan-jelly-cal*, or allowing the 'Church,' which we believe to be a Divine ordinance, to be ever kept back from its rightful heritage of 'feeding the lambs of the fold.'

FAITH'S ROLL CALL.—V.

ISAAC.

"Either your shield or upon it," said the Spartan mother to her son, when he went

forth to war for his country; and when eight sons found one tomb on Sparta's battle-field, she exclaimed, "Victory! Sparta, I bore them but to die for thee!" No wonder Sparta seemed invincible, when with such patriotism the nation was fired. Do we not, however, move in a higher plane as we enter into the enthusiasm of the Moravian mother whose son had entered upon the world's mission field and died? Friends feared to break the tidings; but the brave woman anticipated, and said, "Then is Thomas gone to heaven through the missionary life? Would to God John would take his place!" And John followed in life, and in death also. "Would to God my last son had the spirit of his brothers!" The last son took the mantle of his brothers, entered upon the same work, and was wrapped in his shroud. "Would that I had more sons to give!" said the lone mother, whose foot was now on the brink of the grave. And what shall we say of the son who thus heeded a mother's wish, and went forth, life in hand, to yield that tribute to the God of all? If in the mother's heart devotion dwelt, obedience and self-sacrifice assuredly were manifested in the lives of the sons. If God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten, Christ the Son commended Himself to us by His laying down His life for the world. In like manner, if Abraham's faith was proved by his offering up of Isaac, Isaac none the less commends himself to us by the faith he too manifested as he yielded to his father's will; for Gen. xxii. 6-8 imply a journeying alone, and that it was not a mere question of submission to strength and bonds. Isaac bore himself part of the sacrificial burden. Commentators justly dwell on the deep pathos of these simple verses, "They went both of them together—the father in his noble resolve, the son in his trusting simplicity"—the men left behind, the priest and the victim in loving, lonely, trusting companionship.

Man, with conscience of guilt awakened, in the presence of a dread power that exacteth righteousness, must needs bring offerings to appease the anger of the Most High, and the more precious the gift the more acceptable the sacrifice: hence, the first-born have been brought for transgression—the fruit of the body for the sin of the soul. There is a deep truth striven after in these blind approaches

to God; the more precious the gift we render, the deeper is our devotion proved. God, who gave His Son, has thereby sealed His readiness to bestow the lesser gifts to His ere-while prodigal children (Rom. viii 32); and Jesus, who lays down His life for His friends (John xv. 13), could manifest no greater love. For Abraham to yield to what he deemed a Divine impulse his son—the beloved boy of his old age, and the hope of the promise of blessing—was for to yield his all at the Divine bidding; for the son to yield to the father's will, was to share the father's faith with the noblest filial devotion: and thus father and son were bound together as one in that act, than which, in its intent, no greater manifestation of trust and devotion could be found or set forth. In heathen as in Christian days there have been men found ready to sacrifice everything *not their own* for (as they suppose) salvation. Men whose wealth has been gathered in defiance of the love of God and man, have given largely to the Church, always retaining a lion's share, however, to themselves. But that is not sacrifice; that is but a cowardly rendering of a part lest the whole be taken away. Abraham's sacrifice was made to reveal the other truth which heathen strivings and baptized heathenism among ourselves entirely misses or subverts. "God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering." The propitiation God requires from us is that our attitude towards Him shall be changed, and that we should, yielding to His will, accept and use the provision He hath made: therefore, in that ram caught in the thicket, Abraham received the truth on which the Gospel hinges, "God provides the Lamb which taketh away the sin of the world." If we may trust Jewish tradition, Isaac was twenty-five years old when this event took place. Be that true or otherwise, it was evidently in early life, and thus early were developed those characteristics which rendered Isaac's life one of continued trustfulness and submission.

Very little lies upon the surface regarding Isaac's special character, yet some indications are given sufficient to guide in an outline. He was Sarah's *only* child, and the child of her old age; the energetic, fearless Ishmael had been sent from home before any influence by him could have been excited upon the brother's mind. Other sons that were born in

the family (Gen. xxv. 6) were also sent away, and provided for during the father's lifetime. Isaac was *the* son, heir of the promise and of the father's wealth; no rival was permitted around the paternal hearth. This, however, was amicably arranged, for there does not appear to have been any feud, as in the case of Esau and Jacob, and the elder brothers met peacefully, Isaac with a domestic retinue of servants, Ishmael in the wild splendour of an Arab chieftain with his wild companions, before the cave where was to be laid the dust of a mutually revered father.

The favoured child of his father, the only darling of his mother, the son on whose life cherished hopes seemed to depend, we can well conceive to have been tenderly nurtured, sheltered from every seemingly adverse influence—a spoilt child. That testing scene of Abraham's life, already dwelt upon, must have impressed that darling boy with the truth that, however much his father may have doted upon him, there was One supreme, to whom, beyond all earthly consideration, trust and obedience were due. Where that trust and obedience are rooted, "spoiling" is out of the question; and though we have no instance in Isaac's life of the nerve and vigour seen in Abraham's (Gen. xiv. 14), we do find the placid gentleness which looked to other possessions than the mere joy of earthly navings. In those wild days Isaac was evidently powerful enough not to be attacked (Gen. xxvi. 14)—"the Philistines envied him;" and yet he strove for those things that make for peace, though mightier than they (verse 16). Verses 17-22 remind of Abraham's peaceful faith and contentment, when Lot and he parted asunder; verses 24, 25 reveal the true innerness of that peaceful conversation. He exercised faith in things to come, and rested through a long life in confidence on the promises of God. Isaac's life would appear to have been one of contented ease. Left with great possessions, he peacefully added thereunto, and having enjoyed life here, departed in the full assurance of an entrance into the city which hath the foundations, with that father whose faith and promises he had inherited, and which hopes had been left to his sons as he gave them his paternal blessing. His position has thus been summed up: "He never knew anything but wealthy ease; a his dependents were numerous enough to

protect him in the enjoyment of it to the last. His position brought out no strongly marked character, but it sufficed to show how a quiet and modest retirement may honour God as much as a life of prominent action. The guileless simplicity which lets Jacob overreach him, because he could not disbelieve a son's assurances; the tenderness which lamented a mother so long, and bade Esau kiss him as he came near; the patient submission with which he bears trial which none can escape; the grand obedience with which he puts even life at his father's disposal; the artless purity with which he kept to Rebekah alone as his one wife in an age of polygamy; the majestic strength of his faith in the Divine promises given to his race—a faith which lights up the distant future as he blesses Jacob; and from first to last, his lowly and unwavering homage to the God of his father, make it easy to understand how in this roll call his name as faithful finds its place. He had failings no doubt, though but few are told us; but he manifests how we may walk before God whatever our sphere, and command the respect of our fellow-men, in our life and death, as His faithful servants."

The blessing of Jacob and Esau concerning things to come is the one point in Isaac's life specially mentioned here. Wherein did it manifest faith?

Jacob with his mother committed a wrong, and succeeded. Fraud triumphed over open-hearted frankness. The wrong was done, the prize was gained, there was no reversal of the issue; yet thereby the purposes of God were effected. Isaac's faith acquiesced and waited; in Esau, vindictive impatience was manifested; besides, he had already, in the surrender of the birthright, invited the fraud on Jacob's part. There are "things to come" beyond those that are in the nearer future. It has been said that the veil which hides the future from our sight has been woven by the hand of mercy, and in the spirit of those words we hear it said, "Had I known what I had to pass through, I could not endure." But what if we possessed the *far* sight. The windings of the wilderness way, with rocks surrounding and closing in the scene, are depressing, but when we mount Pisgah's top and see the land spread out before us, with the way now viewed from the beginning to the end, shall we not say, "He led us forth

by a right way?" Watts' lines strike the truth:—

"Could we but climb where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er,
Not Jordan's stream nor Death's cold flood,
Could fright us from the shore."

Jacob's personal life was not a happy one. He reaped as he sowed, in the deceit his children practised upon him. Esau would have been avenged had he never retained a grudge; and Isaac, when he refused to revoke a blessing actually given, had, we judge, faith still that God, in that eternity which is His own, would rectify the wrong, and render unto all their due.

Thus we—by deceit and wrong, blessings seemingly our own by presumed right may be filched from us, because we stoop not to questionable ways; but what matter? No blessing can permanently endure that has not truth to preserve it and righteousness to establish it. Time does not always bring the remedy. What is time? A moment—a dream—a breath to each of us; but eternity is also before us, and there, in its all-testing fire, nothing stands that defiles, worketh abomination, or maketh a lie. He that believeth need not hurry.

This grace of patience was the resultant of Isaac's faith. He was not a man of action, but of trust; and God has a place for both in the many-mansioned home, as He does assuredly find for them a place among His people here. Life would not be endurable if every one took upon his shoulders the world's burdens. Isaac's peaceful, even-tenored life is a necessary factor in the great whole. He is not presented as a perfect type to follow; but in that faith which rests assured through report evil and good, that wavers not even when fraud seems to succeed over truthfulness, we have need to set him as our example. Our trust in God, let it never falter, though all earthly hopes decay. How sorely Isaac's last days must have been tried by that day of blessing! Instead of a calm and holy hour, the paternal blessing is surrounded by deceit, scandalized by domestic jealousy and intrigue fitted to shake all faith in human honour and trust in God's righteousness; but it is at this point Isaac's faith remains unshaken. God's purposes ripen fast—the evil is overruled for good, and His truth is established over the ruin of man's manifold deceit.

" All, all is well, though faith and form
Be sundered in the midst of fear.
There comes a voice to those that hear—
A still, small voice across the storm "

Let us be patient, for all things work together for good, for an eternal weight of glory, to those that love the Lord, the called according to His purpose. Are you resting your eternity there / or on the sands of time inviting ruin ?

A SERMON.

[PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.]

" For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity."—Heb. v. 1, 2.

Christ is the great sun and centre of all that is distinctively Christian. Our planet is one of a system vivified, spun around by that system's great almoner, the sun. The system itself is but one of a larger group owning some far-off star or series of stars for their great centre. That immensely larger group of eddying suns and planets must own some more mighty source of power and of motion, on—on—where shall we stay?—until at length, aching with the infinity, we find the throne of the universe of God! The Gospel presents no far-off source of life and power for human hearts and lives (Rom. x. 6).

In the vision seen from Patmos through the opened heavens, one throne is set, before which all things bow, and to which all things tend—the throne of God and the Lamb; and when throne, temple, sun and moon are lost in the exceeding brightness of the glory which filleth the New Jerusalem, "the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple thereof, for the glory of God lightens it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." The Lamb slain is the central power of the vision John beheld during his exile on the Ægean rock. Thus

" — through the clouds concealing
The home where glory dwells,
Our Jesus comes revealing
The glory that excels."

This epistle was written for Christian Hebrews, and deals largely with the old Mosaic symbolism in its Messianic references. The

Old Testament Scriptures have one direction, and that Messiahward, from the seed promised in Eden lost, to Malachi's prophecy of the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. "Search the Scriptures," said Christ, "they testify of Me;" and thus the Messianic scarlet line runs through all the record. This epistle forms an interpreting key; and as the Lamb slain is the central figure of the Revelation, so the priesthood and sacrifice of Christ is the one great theme of this epistle to Hebrew converts.

We recognize this principle: Christ is Christianity, and Christianity is Christ. Mahomet is not Islam, nor Islam Mahomet. "There is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet," is the cry and faith of Islam. The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world—the Way, the Truth and the Life, is the sum of Christianity; and thus when Christianity was in the bloom of youth, the *person* of Christ formed the first great theological battlefield, and to-day the great battle rages round the personality of the prophet of Nazareth. Unfortunately, some have dogmatized concerning this personality, analyzed, until for them all life has departed; nevertheless, the living personal Christ, the power that comes from Him, real, creative and permanent, is the very element which distinguishes Christianity from every system of worship not divine. The Church to-day needs more faith in the *parousia* of her Divine Head than speculation regarding His *coming*—a realizing sense of the promise's fulfilment, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the consummation." *

The words chosen as our text present that person as the holder of a priestly office, the performer of a priestly work. Written by a Jew for Jews, of the Messiah as the fulfilment of Jewish expectation and Scripture, we must read in the light of Jewish hopes and expectations, the teachings of this epistle; in other words, open the Old Testament for the key of interpretation. There have been those who view the Old Testament as having only an antiquated interest for us; let us learn our gospel from the New Testament, they say. Yet, this epistle is on the canon, and

* It should be known that *coming*, in such passages as Matt xxiv. 3, 27, 37, 39; 1 Cor. xv. 23; 1 Thess. ii. 19, iv. 15, etc., is not the future participle but a noun, precisely as in 1 Cor. xvi. 17; 2 Cor. vii. 6, 7, and that *parousia*, the word thus translated in those passages, is also translated, and rightly, *presence* in 2 Cor. x. 10; Philip. ii. 12.

can only be interpreted from Old Testament lights. Besides, the law is our pedagogue to lead us to Christ. On the other hand, let us disavow sympathy with that school of interpretation—the other extreme—which sees more of Christ in some tabernacle furniture than in the gospels, and mines of curious wealth in the cords and stakes of the sanctuary—analogy which might be found with equal exactness in old Egyptian ruins and Assyrian winged bulls. We do not need to be religious triflers. The golden mean is not far to find. Judaism was the cradle of Christianity, not its temple, and some of the deepest truths of Christian life were foreshadowed in the law, even as from the child the man may be determined. As we read the law Christward we approach Christianity, not in its only possible way, but as they did to whom, next to Christ, we are indebted for all we know of its early doctrine, life and power. Would we could catch the mantle of power as it fell from those whose pen these New Testament records have traced. From these verses we will endeavour to learn some of the lessons they teach concerning our Christ who hath passed into the heavens, ever living.

Two requisites are given in these verses as to the priesthood, fulfilled in the highest sense in Christ:

I. Ordained by God to offer gifts and sacrifices.

II. Himself a man, having sympathy, compassion.

1. Appointed by God. "No man taketh this office to himself but he that is called of God, even Aaron." And here let us avoid the heathen notion of sacrifice as designed to appease an angry God, seeing that the Christian sacrifice of atonement is a gift from that God against whom men sin, and is therefore not a means of propitiation in the heathen sense, but a manifestation of the yearning love which from the All-Father goes forth towards His prodigal children. "God so loved that He gave;" and the Son of God is but the embodiment for us of that mighty love, the sacrifice which reveals the exceeding sinfulness of sin in its relation to the moral government of God, and thus at once the gift and propitiation from God for us.

The offices to be by this appointment performed are declared, "That he may offer both gifts, and sacrifices for sin." *Sacrifice*, when used alone, may, according to the context,

mean either the gifts of thank-offerings, or sacrifices proper, or include both; when distinguished, as here, from gifts, the reference is to the sacrifice of atonement, which was ever with the shedding of blood—*i.e.*, the rendering up of life, for the blood is the life—whilst the gifts would be the incense, meat and fruit offerings accompanying the sacrifices for sin. But for us the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit—a contrite heart. How does man know these gifts and sacrifices will prove acceptable to the God from whom, by transgression and infirmities, he seems separated by a distance infinite?

We have caused offence against one to whom by every bond of dependence and gratitude we are bound. We dread ourselves to appear in that presence lest we be repulsed. We ask a friend to "feel the way for us;" wherewithal shall we draw near to God? God has forestalled our wants by the appointment of a priest; He is faithful and cannot deny Himself, therefore cannot turn aside from the intercession of the office He Himself hath created. Aaron could with boldness appear on behalf of Israel in the presence chamber of Israel's King, seeing that by that King he was appointed for that special object and work, and thus by that very appointment God brought Himself within pleading distance for man. The appointment was in itself the holding forth of the olive branch of peace. It was no allowance made to Jewish prejudice and association, but a deep necessity of man's spiritual life, that is met by this assertion of priestly dignity for the Christ. Surely to every one there is a season of deep heart-searching and bitterness, when the world seems dust and ashes and life a condemnation; experience like a desert, barrenness and drought; earth iron, and heaven brass. "Who shall roll away the stone from this sepulchre?" You have in the silent night watches awaked strangely from slumber, raised yourself on your couch, and looked in vain for the faintest token of light; a strange bewilderment comes over you—utter darkness and solitude. You feel around, and there is nothing familiar to your touch. Are you encased in a living tomb? Such soul bewilderment at times most of us have felt, "as a dream when one awaketh." At such a moment an angel beam of light comes in, revealing the presence of the Eternal. The conscience-smitten Hebrew, tormented by the memory of

his weakness and folly, cries, "Cast me not away from Thy presence," and with trembling looks up; he sees amid the incense clouds the High Priest cleanse himself, present gifts, offer sacrifices, and by Jehovah's own—not bare permission, but—appointment enter into the most holy place, to the visible token of the presence of the Most High. In that priest he sees himself at the mercy seat. And Christ is such a priest! "Being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." What does this mean except that we, poor and needy because frail and sinful, faithless when faithfulness would be a blessing, wilful when wilfulness is death, have not lost hope, for by Divine appointment, not by frantic human endeavours, the High Priest yonder enters within the veil to bear gifts and sacrifices for sin—for *me*—for I too am a child of Abraham and an inheritor of the promises, through Jesus Christ the Saviour.

2. This High Priest is taken *from among men*; not from the cherubic host, not from the angel band, but from among men, ordained "as one who can be gentle towards the ignorant and the wandering, because that He Himself also is compassed with infirmity." In the High Priest man is near to God; and He who thus, with unique sanctity and solitary prerogative, enters once each year into that dark mysterious "holy of holies," is one of ourselves, with us, like us, companion of our wants and dangers, sharer of our rests and joys. Thus truly is He our representative; for the priest is not a teacher, neither is he a king, but one who by Divine appointment has the right to offer on our behalf gifts and sacrifices. Thus—if we may thus express it—God is not keeping us at arm's length, but giving us access as we can bear into His presence; yea, through our great Priest's intercession, are we not now all priests to God? And in the fact that our High Priest is the *man* Christ Jesus, we may with boldness approach Him. God forbid we should ever approach Him with other feelings than those that are reverential. For our own comfort "let more of reverence in us dwell;" yet let us not fear in drawing near, for He whose is the

dread prerogative of entering in first and alone the holy place, "is touched with the feeling of our infirmities." Does "yet without sin" seem to mar the fulness of sympathy? Consider that it is not sin that makes a man compassionate, but the feeling of infirmities that makes manifest how hard it is not to sin. The difficulty of reaching the mountain summit is not fully known by him who, half way up, has been compelled to give over. What can he know of chasms and precipices beyond? But he who has toiled and strained and fallen, and still presses on to the mastery, knows the full bitterness of the toil. Thus Christ—He sounded all the depths of human woe and weakness. So long as the sounding lines touch not the ocean bottom, who can tell its depth, or whether it is possible to sound? Ideas were vague before the plummet touched the ocean's floor; it was even gravely suggested that the ocean depth reached to the other side; but when the plummet touched the bottom, none the less amazed are we at the vastness of the "fathomless abyss!" Nevertheless, along its hidden depths we stretch the cable and bind continents together in constant, living communication. Christ thus has experienced all possible bitternesses and trials of human life, knows their uttermost, has sounded every deep, and therefore can lay the living communication between earth and heaven along those hidden wastes, which one who had failed could never do. Note how the writer of this Epistle has given utterance to some remarkable words regarding this thorough human sympathy (verse 7): "Who in the days of His flesh, having with a strong cry and tears offered up prayers and supplications unto Him that was able to save Him out of death, and having been heard for His reverent fear, though He was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which He suffered." There can be little doubt but that Gethsemane was a culminating point in the Saviour's agony and fear. Into the sufferings of that hour no human eye hath looked; and yet it was His all-comprehending humanity which in that lonely hour was filled with a sorrow even unto death; and though we may not enter into the deep of mystery, we know that that suffering Saviour Priest has entered into the deep of ours, and therefore divinely appointed, humanly sympathetic, no stronger assurance can be to us given that we may

with confidence draw near and find our access to the Father complete.

Brethren, the science and enlightenment of this nineteenth century has not taken away sin, nor does it possess compassion such as will reach it. Only the other day, in a great city, might have been seen, by those who were there, on a car along one of the fashionable streets, a woman of no mean position in society—a slobbering drunkard, with a little child thus made partaker of a mother's shame. Do you comprehend the degradation? You enter a drawing-room where a lady presides and a little girl dances round a joyous sunbeam, and you recognize that same lady in that drivelling drunkard—slovenly, immodest—and in that lively child the drunkard's little wean! And of such sorrows every city is full; and the seeds of such degradation find in every heart soil too ready for reception. Whither are we to turn for hope and life? To the chemist in his laboratory—the philosopher in his chair? to the police magistrate and his sentence, or our noisy legislative halls? to our civilization which makes such things possible, or the enterprise which builds its palaces upon such wrecks? or to the “calm pity of the ever blessed God, who Himself has been surrounded through bright millenniums with the songs of angels crowned with everlasting light, and making sweet music with their harps of gold—that watches over the destinies of man; and to one at His side, in yonder palace of eternal joy, the brightness of His glory, the express image of His person—who Himself once sank into a deeper darkness than ever made us tremble, and realized the awful weight and burden of human wretchedness as you have never realized it; one who, in a world of misery, stood alone in an awful supremacy of woe, as now, in a world of glory, He stands alone in a splendid supremacy of bliss—whose title was, ‘the man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief’—upon whose vesture and thigh this name is now written, ‘King of kings, and Lord of lords?’”
Need I reply—

“Suff'ring Saviour, with thorn crown,
Bruised and bleeding, sinking down;
Heavy laden, weary worn,
Fainting, dying, crushed and torn!—All for me!

“Jesus, Saviour, pure and mild,
Let me ever be Thy child;
So unworthy though I be,
Thou did'st suffer this for me!—All for me!

“Fain would I to Thee be brought;
Blessed Lord, forbid it not:
In the kingdom of Thy grace
Give Thy wandering child a place!—Even me!”

Can you have another prayer ere this may find an answer?

SUBSTANCE OF AN ADDRESS ON CONGREGATIONALISM:

Delivered at meeting of the Central Association, Yorkville, on 8th March, 1882, by Rev. W. W. Smith.

There are in the world two root-systems of government: that which (as old Herodotus has it) “takes the people into partnership,” and that which has its root in the individual and absolute will of the ruler. Kaiser William of Germany shows a good example of the latter, in his late “Rescript,” where he lays it down with exceeding plainness that the Emperor's will is the origin and fountain of law and authority, and that the ministers of the Government are to be responsible to *him* only. Britain shows an example of the other, or constitutional government. The people have rights, and exercise them—rights which no Government can touch: the will of the people, expressed through constitutional forms of their own making, being the fountain of power.

So in churches. There are some in which Church power is found in some chief ruler, and his will and decisions are the law of the Church. The other class are those where the people manage the affairs of the church—of which Congregational Churches, so called, present, in theory, a perfect example. With imperfect men nothing is perfect but their aims and desires. Yet they who aim at perfection will attain far more than they who put up with less for a model. Tom Hood tells of a shepherd boy who fell in love with a princess, and died of a hopeless passion, and of whom it was written—

“His love was nobly born and died,
Though all the rest was mean.”

So, let us keep our model high, and by the help of God, bring our performance ever nearer to the perfection we have before us, remembering always that the Church, properly, has no legislative power. The constitution, the laws, of Christ's kingdom are all in the New Testament. We can only frame by-laws within the limits of the constitution. Our power is judicial and executive. We don't expect our sheriffs and magistrates to make the laws; they merely carry them out.

Our organization is of the simplest. A number of Christian men and women come together in Christian fellowship, and (having confidence in each other's Christian character) agree to walk together as a Church of Jesus Christ, and obey Him, and bear

each other's burdens, and watch over each other in the Lord. That is all. A man who knew nothing of our polity once proposed to me to found a Church, in the town where we lived, on such principles. He thought "it would be lovely." And so it would; and so it is who-rever the spirit of the Master is followed and sought.

We are not afraid of democracy. We practise it, and insist on it in all our secular societies. Why should we discard it from the Church? The putting upon every member something of the responsibility of the actions of the Church—just as Paul did with the Church members at Corinth, in the matter of the brother who was bringing disgrace on the Church by his evil conduct—is at once an education and a blessing. We know no simpler organization; and we fail to see any Scripture authority for placing Church power elsewhere than in the hands of the people themselves.

We try to uphold two vital principles—a converted membership and government by the people. We think no man ought to be encouraged to come as a member into a Church, till he has become, by the new birth, a member of Christ; and having so become, that he *ought*, without delay, to range himself in line with Christ's organized disciples.

The absence of a written creed (the authority for which is, of right, as much an open question with us as with the men who made it) we do not feel as a loss; for it sends us, each man for himself, to the Word of God—to see what *that* says. Our liberty is exactly equal to our responsibility: we are to "search the Scriptures," and to guide our lives by them. And we must have the liberty of doing so. No man has a right to impose on me an authoritative creed, unless he can bear my responsibility in following it, supposing it to be wrong.

This, then, in brief, is what we call "Congregationalism:" Each particular Church endowed with all the power Christ has given to His Church on earth, however much or little that may be. A Church formed of converted persons. The actions of the Church by the vote of the members. The officers chosen by the Church itself. The New Testament the standard for doctrine. The Church a Christian democracy.

[NOTE BY THE EDITOR.—We thank our brother for his MS., as we did for the address, to which with pleasure we listened. He will suffer a word, not antagonistic, but suggestive. Is the word *democracy* wise as regards a New Testament Church? especially "remembering always that the Church properly has no legislative power," as our brother urges. Is not the Church rather theocratic, Christocentric, asking independency only that it may be free to express its life and perform its work? Again, does our brother's closing

paragraph sum up all of Congregationalism? We would invite thought and expression upon what must be considered a complimentary truth—the fellowship of the Churches, its ground and necessary limitations. That, as it seems to us, is the question of the hour. The autonomy of the individual Church is conceded; the other invites exposition.]

Since writing the above, we, casually turning over a pile of papers in search of a missing pamphlet, found a remnant of a sermon which seems to have been preached at one of the unions, from which we cull the following:—

"The mistake is sometimes committed both by the enemies and friends of Congregationalism, of speaking of it as a democracy—a system that locates all power in the people. Rather it is an absolute monarchy—a THEOCRACY under which the single, constant question is, what is the will of our one Master, Christ? It is not a system upon which there are 'many masters,' and the people are all sovereign. Some of the worst evils that have sprung up among us have arisen from the idea that an Independent Church may do what it pleases—that ministers and members are alike to do what is right in their own eyes. The truth is, they are 'under the law to Christ,' and have no right to do anything which they have not reason to believe He sanctions. No act of any Congregational Church is rightly performed unless it be done in the spirit of obedience to Christ; nor is any act of such Church valid if it will not bear the scrutiny of the New Testament. The members put their neck under a yoke of human bondage if they unconditionally pledge themselves to submit to whatever acts of discipline the Church thinks fit to perform. The promise of subjection to discipline must be limited by the proviso that it must be in harmony with the Holy Scriptures.

"Properly speaking, no body of human beings has any power to *make law*. Legislatures even can only apply law that is already in existence. The distinction between higher and lower law which American legislation concerning slavery has made prominent, is one of immense importance. Only the higher law is law at all in the true sense of the word. Law, so called, that cannot be harmonized with the eternal principles of right, is usurpation and tyranny, and no man owes it any allegiance or respect for a moment.

"So there is no ecclesiastical law but what has emanated from Christ. Our business is to take the statute-book He has issued, and apply its provisions to the cases that arise. When we receive a Church member it is on the ground of the prior reception of that person by Christ. We have no right to reject whom the Lord has received, nor to receive whom the Lord rejects. We have only one point to settle

about an applicant for fellowship, and that is, whether Christ has received him. It matters not what peculiarity of opinion, disposition, temperament or circumstances there may be, this one thing settles the question. Thus, also, in all Church business, we are constantly led up face to face with our responsibility to Christ. In the choice of a pastor, a Church has but to ask, 'Is there ground to believe the Chief Shepherd would have this servant of His to be our spiritual overseer?' If there be hesitation or perplexity between two candidates, the prayerful inquiry should be, 'Show which of these two Thou hast chosen!'

"Not our own will is to be done, but the Lord's will—not our own impulses, plans or judgments are to be carried out, but, so far as we have the means of ascertaining them, the behests of Christ.

"It is a blessed thing for the entire membership of the Church thus to be brought into constant contact with the Master. It promotes a sense of dependence on Him. It quickens the feeling of obligation and keeps alive the spirit of obedience. It exalts the details of business into acts of service to our Lord, and gives us as high and glorious a position as that of the very angels of heaven, since we may say of whatever we do—

'It means Thy praise, nowever poor;
An angel's act can do no more.'

It keeps us in the presence and under the eye of Christ. It impresses us with the weight of that most important sentiment, 'HE IS LORD OF ALL!'

MY DREAM.

It was a beautiful Sabbath morning. I seemed to be in a large church, filled with attentive worshippers. All around me were strangers; yet so pleasant were the countenances, whose cheerful smiles seemed to say, "Make yourself quite at home; you are among friends," that the lonely feeling which often comes over one in a crowded church to not one of whose worshippers he is known, troubled me not at all. While waiting for the pastor's entrance, I gazed around the building. It was neat and tasteful, but plain in its construction. My attention was particularly attracted by numerous mottoes on the walls, most of them inculcating the duty of doing good.

Back of the pulpit was this inscription: "On the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him." In other places I read, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." "If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself." These,

and other passages of similar import, occupied my attention, when the door of the anteroom near the pulpit opened, and a noble-looking old man, with firm, erect step, entered. He was one of those specimens of beautiful old age of which we occasionally see a type. As he gazed upon his people, the love in his heart seemed to shine through and illuminate his whole countenance. After the preliminary exercises, the pastor preached an excellent sermon on Faith and Works. At its close, pointing to the inscription, he said, "We will now prove our faith by our works, by taking our usual weekly contribution. But first, brethren, suffer a word of counsel. Last Sabbath some of you, in your deep love for the cause, made larger contributions than your circumstances would warrant. Remember, Paul says, 'Lay by in store as the Lord has prospered you.' I know it is so pleasant to give to the needy, that we are liable to mistakes in this direction."

I was thunderstruck. "Where am I?" thought I; "in a Christian church, and the pastor cautioning his people against too large contributions."

I remember reading of a similar occurrence in a heathen land, among the new converts to Christianity; but to be an eye-witness of such a scene in a Christian congregation, it seems incredible.

I watched the people closely as the boxes were passed, and became more and more amazed; for nearly every person—men, women, and children—contributed, and did it so cheerfully, even joyfully, that it was a pleasure to see them. "I must speak to that man, and learn the secret of his success with his people," thought I.

After the congregation had dispersed, many of them greeting me cordially as they passed out, I said to the pastor, as he took me warmly by the hand,

"You must have had an unusual collection to-day."

"No," he answered, "no larger than usual. You heard my caution to my people; they enjoy giving so much, that, every now and then, I find it necessary to hold them back, lest some of them do more than they are able." "Why, sir!" I exclaimed, "how have you educated them? Most ministers are obliged to urge, coax, and sometimes drive their people to give."

"Educate them? With the Bible, to be sure. They are Christians, and even the poorest of them want to show their love to their Master by obeying His commands."

"Christians! But you don't wish me to understand that all the Christians in your church contribute for benevolent objects? Why, sir, in the communion to which I belong, two-thirds of the churches do nothing for Foreign Missions, and many of them nothing for Home Missions and other like operations."

The old man raised his hands in surprise and horror, and his voice was very sad as he answered.

"Surely they cannot be Christians. What book do they take as the foundation of their faith? Not the Bible! for almost every page of that volume is luminous with precepts of love and self-sacrifice. A Christian, and not love to bestow in charity! It cannot be. But may I ask," eyeing me curiously, "what is the name of your denomination?"

I have never been ashamed of my religious home; yet the blood rushed to my face as the question was put, and I hastened to reply,

"But, sir, my denomination is not alone in being derelict to duty in this matter. Almost every benevolent organization is crippled for the want of funds. Many Christians feel that they have no obligations to discharge to others, at least pecuniarily."

"No obligations!" exclaimed the old man. "What is it to be a Christian? Is it not to be like Christ? Why, the very essence of Christianity is to deny self. If there is one duty emphasized, from Genesis to Revelation, it is the duty of giving. Don't you remember the many injunctions to God's ancient people on benevolence?"

"O, yes! but many now affirm those old Jewish laws were only for that people, and have long been obsolete."

"Obsolete, indeed!" repeated the pastor, as a curious smile played around his mouth. But what do these people do with all the injunctions of the New Testament on this same subject? Are they also obsolete? If so, we modern Christians are much to be pitied. If, caring nothing for the interests of our neighbour, we are to look out only for ourselves, our minds and hearts will become so dwarfed that we shall be hardly worth the saving. But, thank God! His commands are yet binding upon us; and it is not only a duty, but a blessed privilege to sow bountifully and broadcast of the rich gifts showered upon us. When my people are converted, they not only lay themselves, but their possessions, on God's altar, and thus each one of them becomes a centre of holy influence, a point from which radiate beams of mellow light."

The old man had waxed eloquent as he preached. His eyes flashed, as his tall form seemed to tower above me. In his excitement his tones became deeper and more thrilling; but while I gazed, spell-bound, suddenly he vanished from my sight.

Behold! alas! it was only a dream.—*Morning Star.*

HARD TIMES CONQUERED.

BY MRS. HENRY WARD BEECHER.

About seventy years ago, a physician with a young family springing up around him, consulting his wife, as all good husbands find it prudent to do, bought a large farm in one of our New England States, where

every farmer truly earns his living by the sweat of his brow. Both felt that nowhere could their children be trained to industry and frugality so thoroughly as on a good farm.

Of course the Doctor was obliged to "run in debt" for this property and give a mortgage on the place. The payments were to be made quarterly, and promptly, or the whole would be forfeited and revert back to the original owner. In those days physicians were not likely to become millionaires in a hurry, and though his practice was large, the pay was small and not always sure. He therefore locked to the farm to bring forth the means to release him from the bondage of debt; and the children, even to the youngest, were taught to labour for, and look forward eagerly to, the time "when we have paid for the farm!"

The creditor was the doctor's father-in-law, through his first wife, and while the good old gentleman lived, if by any mishap or over press of business the quarterly payment had been delayed, it would have been kindly excused. But for the ten or fifteen years that he lived after the sale of the farm, there had not been one delay in payment, though now and then there would come a time when it was very hard work to secure the needed sum in time, for even in the olden days "hard times" were often found prowling about, to the great terror of our hard-working New England farmers. But little by little the heavy debt was diminishing, and they were looking forward, hopefully, to the year of Jubilee, when they could sit under their own vine and fig tree with none to molest and make them afraid.

At this period the father-in-law died. He had but two children—daughters. The younger, the doctor's wife, died childless. The elder married a hard, close, scheming man, who, knowing that his wife and children would inherit this property in case the payments were not promptly met, lost no opportunity of remarking that Dr. Mason's farm would doubtless soon come into his hands, as with his large family he must fail by-and-by.

The financial troubles which the war of 1812 had caused, as all wars are sure to do, were not yet adjusted. Money was scarce and payments very difficult. Ten children now filled the old house with merriment and gladness; but they were to be clothed and educated.

Let us see how successfully they had been taught to make their high spirits and resolute wills cheerful auxiliaries in lifting the burden which, since their grandfather's death, was pressing heavily upon their parents.

At the time of which we write, among other crops, rye was extensively raised. It was used for food among the farmers quite as much as wheat, but was also valuable for other purposes. When full-grown,

but still in the milk, large quantities were cut to be used for "braiding." The heads were used for "fodder;" the stocks, after being soaked in strong, hot scap-suds, were spread on the grass for the sun to whiten. When sufficiently bleached and ready for use, they were cut at each joint, the husk stripped off, and the straw thus prepared tied in pound bundles for sale.

Bonnets then meant something more than a small bit of silk or velvet with a flower attached, and the "straw braid" for making them was in great demand. Boys and girls were alike taught to braid, and the long winter evenings were not spent idly. Dr. Mason raised large crops of rye, and each child, almost as soon as weaned, was taught to *braid*, and was soon able to do much toward clothing himself. At six years of age, a dollar a week was easily earned; at eight, three dollars; and in something of that proportion up to the eldest.

Does anyone think such a life, with such an object in view, was hard or cruel? Never was there a greater mistake. It was of immense value to these young spirits. They had something real, that they could understand, to labour for. There was life and courage and true heroism in it. An education—with here and there, to be sure, some rough places to pass over—which was worth more to them than all the money millionaires bequeath their sons and daughters—an education which prepared them in after-life to be courageous and self-helpful.

It is this kind of training that has made New England's sons and daughters strong and self-reliant, and the lack of it which makes these *hard times* such a horror, that we hear of so many who seek death by their own hands as preferable to the struggle for better times.

In the long winter evenings, when the labour of the day was over, the children home from school, and the "chores" all finished, the candles were lighted and the evening work began. The mother in her corner was busy making and mending for her large family. The doctor, if not with the sick, smoked and read opposite her. The children gathered round the long table in the middle of the room, where lay the school-books and straw all ready machined for braiding, while the old, fireplace, heaped with blazing logs of hickory, oak, and fragrant birch, made the room warm and cheerful. Here, with their books fastened open before them to the next day's lessons, the children with nimble fingers plaited the straw and studied their lessons at the same time. For children taught to be industrious usually carry the principles thus developed into the school-room, and are ambitious to keep as near the head of the class as possible.

Such a family as this was well equipped to meet and conquer adversity. For several days Dr. Mason had been unusually grave and silent. All noticed it,

but no remarks were made until evening, when he came to supper, so unmistakably worried and despondent that his wife inquired if he was not well.

"Yes, well enough. But, Lucy, I have so far been unable to collect money for our quarterly payment. So much is due me that I had no fears but that enough would be promptly paid to save me any trouble."

"How much is lacking?"

"Not quite a hundred dollars; but it might as well be thousands for any chance I now see of getting it in season. There is now so much sickness about, that, as you know, I have had no rest, and little time to collect money. If not ready before midnight tomorrow we are ruined. I have kept it from you as long as I dared, still hoping that those who ought to pay me would do so."

"Have you told them how very important it is that you have the money?"

"No; I did not wish to speak of it. Mr. H. is watching greedily for a 'slip,' and we need expect no mercy at his hands. Under our hard labour and good care this farm has risen greatly in value—too much so for him to spare us an hour, if he can once get hold of it. I am almost discouraged. It is the darkest time we have seen yet. But I must be off, and shall probably be out all night. To think there are not forty-eight hours between us and ruin! And my hands so tied by several bad cases that I may not find one hour to try and make up the little that is needed.

For a few minutes after the doctor left, the children stood silent and sad, watching their mother. At last she said—

"Children, we can help father through this, and save our home, if you are willing to submit to some little self-denial. No; I should have said to *great* self-denial. Each of you has worked diligently to buy new garments for winter. You need them, and deserve them, and I should be so happy and proud to see you all neat and comfortable. But to help father, are you willing to let me try to clean, mend, and make over your old clothes, and use what you have earned to help brighten this dark day? The braid you have on hand, and what is now due at the store, is all your own, or to be expended for your own clothes, and if each one of you is not *perfectly* willing, I don't wish you to give it up."

It was a beautiful sight to see those eager faces watching their mother, ready to answer the moment she had finished; for in the olden time children were taught that it was disrespectful to interrupt anyone when speaking, even when, as in this case, it was difficult to keep silent. But the reply when given was prompt, enthusiastic, and what she had confidently looked for.

"Thanks, dear children! Now, then, hasten. First bring me all your braid, and let us see how much it will come to."

The braid, in ten-yard rolls, was brought, and its value estimated.

"With that which is now due us at the store we have nearly sixty dollars! Well done for all these little fingers! But now we must devise a way to make up the remainder. Your father spoke last night of a large quantity of straw, which, if cut, would bring in something. He will be away all night. If you work well we can cut many pounds before midnight. Now, girls, help me wash the dishes, while your brothers bring, before dark, the straw we can cut to-night."

By the time the candles were lighted all was ready to begin.

The younger children were excused at their usual bed-time, but the other, worked with their mother till the fall clock in the corner struck one. Then all retired for a few hours' rest.

Dr. Mason returned home in season for breakfast, and his wife inquired if the eldest son could drive her over to the neighbouring town to dispose of some braid for the children. He replied that he must be gone again all day, and neither son nor team could well be spared from important work at home. But a strange thing followed this implied refusal. Mrs. Mason, who never allowed her plans or wishes to interfere with her husband's, now repeated her request, and urged it till he yielded, from sheer surprise, apparently, that his wife could be so persistent.

The doctor went his usual round, and the mother and son departed on their mysterious errand. Their business accomplished, they returned well satisfied, and ready for supper when the father arrived.

A deeper gloom was on his face when he entered; but no word was spoken till all were seated at the table. Too much absorbed in his troubled thoughts to notice the suppressed excitement plainly visible on every face, he was startled as Mrs. Mason placed before him the amount required.

"It is our children's offering, and sufficient to make up the needed sum. I persisted in going away this morning against your wishes, because I saw no other escape. We cut the straw last night—many willing hands make quick work; I sold it, and their braid added to it, with what was already due them, completed the sum."

Those who witnessed the scene will never forget it: Dr. Mason with his arm around his wife, and both in tears, calling her all happy names; the children clinging about their parents, so joyful that home was saved, and they had helped to save it.

"Put Charlie into the waggon, quick. If he fails me not, the six miles between here and M—— will be

the shortest I ever rode. I shall be home before bed-time to thank you all. I cannot now. I hope we shall never come so near ruin again."

And they never did. In two years the last dollar was paid, and then Dr. Mason vowed he would never owe anyone a cent. He kept his vow.—*Chris. Union.*

PRACTICE VERSUS PREACHING.

"Mother, how much tobacco does it take to make a sermon?"

"What do you mean, my son?"

"Why, I mean how much tobacco does father chew, and how many cigars does he smoke, while he is making a sermon?"

"Well, the tobacco and cigars don't make the sermons, do they?"

"I don't know but they do—they help along, at any rate; for I heard father tell Mr. Morris, the minister who preached for him last Sunday, that 'he could never write well without a good cigar.' So I thought maybe the tobacco makes the sermons, or the best part of them."

"My son, I am shocked to hear you talk so!"

"Well, mother, I was only telling what father said, and it made me think. He said that a prime cigar was a great solace (whatever that is); and he said, besides, it drove away the blues—put him into a happy frame of mind, and simulated or stimulated his brain, so he could work better. I suppose stimulate means to make one think easier; and I've been thinking, mother, if I had something to stimulate my brain, I could study better; and the next time I have one of those knotty questions in arithmetic to work out, I will get a cigar, and see if it won't help me along. You know you often tell me if I follow my father's example I will not go far astray; and now I would like a few cigars, to make my brain work well, so that I can stand at the head of my class."

"I hope I shall never see my son with a cigar in his mouth; it would be the first step to ruin!"

"You don't think father is ruined, do you? and he has taken a good many steps since he has taken the first cigar."

"I think, my son, your father would be better without cigars, or tobacco in any shape; but he formed the habit when he was young, and now it is hard to break off."

"But father says 'we are to blame for forming bad habits, and it is a sin to continue in them.' I heard him say that in the pulpit not long ago. There is old Tom Jenkins, who gets tight every day. I suppose he would find it rather hard to leave off drinking whiskey. But father says 'it is no excuse for a man, when he gets drunk, to say he is in the habit of getting drunk.' He says it only needs resolution and moral courage to break off bad habits."

"But, my son, smoking tobacco is not quite drinking whiskey and getting drunk."

"No, I know that, mother; but I was going on to say that if smoking was a bad habit, father would have given it up long ago. But I don't believe smoking is any harm; and it does some folks a great deal of good. You know how nervous and fidgety father gets when he has to go a day without any cigars; and, besides, he could not write his sermons without them. I am sure, if he could write as well and do as much good without using tobacco, he would not spend so much for it. When I want to buy a little candy, or a bit of spruce gum, father tells me I had better practise the grace of self-denial and save my money for the missionary box. Besides, he says such stuff is not good for me; it will spoil my teeth and ruin my health. Now, I am quite certain that father would not spend so much money—more than I ever spent in my whole life for candy, gum, clothes, and everything else—if he did not believe tobacco was a real benefit to himself and others. Why, mother, do you know anything about the price of cigars in these times? Cousin Edward Wilkins, who smokes a great many, says you can't get a decent cigar for less than fifteen cents; and the best cost forty and fifty cents apiece. I heard Deacon Tompkins say his cigars cost him six hundred dollars a year; for he uses nothing but the very best, and they are all imported. He told father so the other day, when they were smoking in the study after dinner, and I was trying to get my arithmetic lesson. Now, mother, do you think my father and the deacon and a whole host of ministers and elders, and temperance lecturers, and lots of good Christian people spend so much money to keep themselves in bad habits? Why, just the sum that Deacon Tompkins alone spends for cigars, would support a missionary in the West for a whole year, and would be a better salary than most Western missionaries now get. Really, mother, I can't believe that using tobacco is wrong, as long as so many good Christians use it. I don't care so much about chewing. I would rather have some nice clean spruce-gum, like they have down in Dickson's store; I would like to smoke as my father does; and please, mother, give me a little money to get some cigars."

"My son, you may talk the matter over to your father. Ask him if he thinks it will improve your habits and your manners to learn to smoke; if he approves, you may ask him for a cigar."—*N. Y. Republican*.

THE THREE CROWNS.

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to them that love Him."
—James i. 12. (See also Rev. ii. 10.)

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day, and not me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing."—2 Tim. v. 7, 8.

"And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."
—1 Peter v. 4.

DR. LEIFCHILD, of London, said to a theological student: "I will give you my rules for preaching; they were composed by myself; they are very short, and I have put them into rhyme:—

Begin low,
Go on slow;
Rise higher,
And take fire;
When most impressed,
Be self-possessed;
At the end wax warm,
And sit down in a storm."

THE Rev. Narayan Sheshadri has just returned to India from a visit to Great Britain. He writes that the people beset him with all sorts of inquiries. "They ask me," writes Mr. Sheshadri, "if I saw any traces of the giant Rawan, who had ten faces and twenty arms; whether he was still reigning there. Whether Lanku (Ceylon) was still submerged in the sea and kept up burning. Whether I came across a race of people who were blessed with such large ears that they used the one as a mattress and covered themselves with the other! Whether I saw any race of men with faces like that of a horse! Whether there is a country where there are only women and no men!"

ALEXANDRA, Princess of Wales, has set in England one excellent fashion. She has made so public a display of attachment to her young sons and daughters, that it has become the mode for the fashionable British matron similarly to express her affections. Small boys and girls have, it is stated, eclipsed toy terriers and pugs as the pets paraded by ladies in Victoria and on foot in Hyde Park at the height of the season. 'Tis a pity that there is not in this country some one of sufficient influence to produce a similar effect. The disgusting practice of carrying lap-dogs everywhere is becoming common. In the cars, the parks, and the hotels, and even in church, they can be found; and some women seem to be pleased with the attention—generally disgusted attention—with which their often hideous pets are watched. If the remarks that are made by strangers about those women, old and young, who carry dogs in public places, were heard by those to whom they refer, poodles would be left by respectable women to those who could not sink lower in public esteem.—*Christian Advocate*.

Mission Notes.

MADURA is a district, with a city of the same name, in the south of British India, its eastern boundary being the strait or gulf which separates the island of Ceylon from the mainland. It is the seat of Mission work, regarding which we find noted the following item:—"A Christian church has been built with stones from the ruins of a heathen temple, by the native converts connected with the Madura Mission of the American Presbyterian Board."

On the opposite side of the Bay of Bengal lies Burmah—Independent and British. Independent Burmah is about 540 miles long, 420 broad, with a population variously estimated, but probably about that of Canada—4,000,000. The Government is an absolute monarchy, kept in check by the fear of revolution only, yet the people are industrious in general, contented and intelligent. Buddhism is for the most part the religion owned. There is no humanity shown in the treatment of criminals; oriental cruelty outdoing itself in savage ingenuity. Burmah will be remembered as a field of the Baptist Missionary Society, and of the labours of Felix Carey. The following recent news, from *Word and Work*, is not without its interest, especially in these days when ancient records are being unrolled and studied. The Karens are a semi independent tribe among the Burmese:

"The progress of Christianity among the Karens of Burmah has often been noted as interesting and full of promise. Within little more than half a century a vigorous native Church has taken possession of large portions of the country. The Karen Church, while attentive to the wants of its own members, has, in a true missionary spirit, extended its operations to the neighbouring tribes. Reports that have reached us concerning the character and activity of this Church prove its true apostolic succession.

"When the missionaries first visited this people they found that a tradition had descended, through many generations, from father to son, in which the hope of a visit from strangers who should bring back to them a revelation they had lost, formed a prominent feature. They had been thus prepared to welcome such teachers; and on comparing the statements of the missionaries with the unwritten traditions of their fathers (their language was at that time an unwritten one), they found such a general correspondence as confirmed them in recognizing these teachers as those whom they had long been encouraged to expect.

"Their traditions are curiously akin in many respects to the Biblical narrative. They believe God to be immutable, eternal, and that He was from the begin-

ning of the world. Man was created from the earth, and woman from one of man's ribs. Perhaps we may best indicate the relation between their traditions and the opening part of Genesis by a somewhat lengthy but most interesting paragraph concerning the first temptation:—

"'Father God said, "My son and daughter, Father will make and give you a garden. In the garden are seven different kinds of trees, bearing seven different kinds of fruits. Among the seven, one tree is not good to eat; eat not of its fruit. If you eat, you will become old; you will die. Eat not! All I have created I give to you. Eat and drink with care. Once in seven days I will visit you. All I have commanded you, observe and do. Forget Me not. Pray to Me every morning and night."

"*The Temptation and Fall.*—'Afterwards Satan came and said, "Why are you here?" "Our Father God put us here," they replied. "What do you eat here?" Satan inquired. "Our Father God created food and drink for us—food without end." Satan said, "Show me your food." And they went, with Satan following behind them, to show him. On arriving at the garden, they showed him the fruits, saying, "This is sweet, this is sour; this is bitter, this is astringent; this is savoury, this is fiery; but this tree we know not whether it be sour or sweet. Our Father God said to us, 'Eat not the fruit of this tree: if you eat, you will die.' We ate not, and do not know whether it be sour or sweet." "Not so, O my children," Satan replied; "the heart of your Father God is not with you; this is the richest and sweetest. It is richer than the others, sweeter than the others; and not merely richer and sweeter, but if you eat it you will possess miraculous powers; you will be able to ascend into heaven and descend into the earth; you will be able to fly. The heart of your God is not with you. This desirable thing He has not given you. My heart is not like the heart of your God. He is not honest; He is envious. I am honest; I am not envious. I love you, and tell you the whole. Your Father God does not love you; He did not tell you the whole. If you do not believe me, do not eat. Let each one eat, carefully, a single fruit; then you will know." The man replied, "Our Father God said to us, 'Eat not the fruit of this tree,' and we eat it not." Thus saying, he rose up and went away. But the woman listened to Satan, and, thinking what he said rather proper, remained. Satan deceived her completely, and she said to him, "If we eat shall we indeed be able to fly?" "My son and daughter," Satan replied, "I persuade you because I love you." The woman took one of the fruit and ate. And Satan, laughing, said, "My daughter, you listened to me well; now go, give the fruit to your husband, and say to him, 'I have eaten the fruit; it is exceedingly

rich.' If he does not, deceive him, that he may eat.' The woman, doing as Satan told her, went and coaxed her husband till she won him over to her own mind; and he took the fruit from the hand of his wife and ate. When he had eaten, she went to Satan, and said, "My husband has eaten the fruit." On hearing that, he laughed exceedingly, and said, "Now you have listened to me; very good, my son and daughter."

"*The Curse.*—'The day after they had eaten, early in the morning, God visited them; but they did not (as they had been wont to do) follow Him, singing praises. He approached them, and said, "Why have you eaten the fruit of the tree that I commanded you not to eat?" They did not dare to reply, and God cursed them. "Now, you have not observed what I commanded you," He said. "The fruit that is not good to eat I told you not to eat; but you have not listened, and have eaten. Therefore you shall become old, you shall be sick, and you shall die."

"Has the time not come when an endeavour might be made to avail ourselves more fully of the assistance of this indigenous people in spreading the Gospel throughout our wide Indian possessions?"

We gather from the indispensable *Missionary Herald*, of Boston, the following items of Missionary news:—

"The striking change which has taken place in the forces engaged in foreign mission service within the past forty years, should be considered by those who seek to estimate the future progress of the work. The increase in the number of ordained missionaries connected with the American Board, from the year 1840 to the present time, has been from 134 to 158, or only eighteen per cent.; whereas the native agents, including pastors, preachers, catechists, and teachers, have increased during the same period from 122 to 1,717, or about 1,400 per cent. Hundreds of these native helpers are supported wholly or mainly by their own people. Christendom has not to furnish an army of occupation for the pagan world. Recruits are to be found in the lands which we enter; and now that the start has been made, these recruits may be expected to come forward even more rapidly than within the past forty years. In this view there is everything to inspire hope for the future."

"Certain travellers have affirmed that the Japanese were in advance of us, and that Christian nations had no example of morality to offer them superior to that they now possessed. On the other hand, testimony has been presented by some who have long resided in the Empire, tending to show that underneath a decorous outward appearance there was great laxity of conduct. A striking testimony on this point appears in a vernacular paper of Japan, the *Osaka Nippo*. The *Hiogo News*, in quoting the article from the

Nippo, speaks of it as 'entitled to the consideration usually accorded to those who possess peculiarly reliable sources of information.' This paper affirms that there are no schools in Osaka where the life is not eaten out by immoralities. 'Students who assemble here, long before they have become accomplished scholars, return to their homes, it is said, to the extent of eight or nine out of every ten. They come from different provinces with high hopes and worthy ambition, but only a year or two passes before we see them, weak and without energy, returning home to implore the pity of parents and relatives, after which they are worthless, save to work in the fields.' The statements made in this article as to the profligacy and licentiousness of the city are such as cannot be reproduced. Let it be remembered that these statements as to social corruptions in Japan are made not by missionaries, but by the Japanese themselves."

CHAUTAUQUA IN 1882.

The Chautauqua Foreign Missionary Institute invites all friends of Missions, Foreign and Home, in every denomination and from every land, to its fourth annual gathering, in the beautiful grove beside Lake Chautauqua, a little west of the city of Buffalo, from July 29 to August 3. The great days at Chautauqua will be: Opening Day, C. Teachers' Retreat and C. School of Languages, July 8; Memorial Day, C. Literary and Scientific Circle, July 9; Closing Exercises, C. T. R., July 28; *Mid-Season Celebration, Saturday, July 29; Fourth Anniversary, C. F. M. I., Monday, July 31; Ninth Annual Assembly Opening, August 1; Closing Exercises, C. F. M. I., Thursday, Aug. 3; Memorial Day Anniversary, C. L. S. C., Aug. 5; Annual Day, Aug. 5; Denominational Congresses, Aug. 9; Alumni Day—Reunion, illuminated fleet, etc., Aug. 10; C. L. S. C. Day, First Commencement, Aug. 12; C. School Theology Day, Aug. 15; College Society Day, Aug. 17; The Farewell, Aug. 21. Suggestions and inquiries will be welcomed by the Executive Committee; W. A. Duncan, Esq., chairman, Syracuse, N. Y.; C. P. Hard, St. Mark's Parsonage, Buffalo, N. Y., secretary.*

A LEVEL-HEADED BISHOP.

Bishop Harris, of Michigan, is one of the brightest and manliest of the Episcopal bishops in this country. He went to the Episcopal seminary in New York lately, and told the students that "the age was intensely intolerant of mediævalism—that men are seeking in our day not for priests to absolve, but for teachers to guide. Never was the prophetic office so recognized, and never were men so willing to listen to a man of God. More than being masters of ceremonies, they must be ambassadors of God. Therefore," said he, "leaving liturgies and ceremonials, it was redeemed, regenerated, high-minded men, speaking with living wills, hearts, and voices, that in our day could be the ministers of grace and power." Truly, a "level-headed" bishop.—*Presbyterian*.

News of the Churches.

THE following example of honesty in the taking of a paper will speak for itself. Our business manager informs us that the paper has been regularly sent to and taken out from the Post-office for nearly eighteen months since the paid subscription expired: "I never Subscribed for the Independent nor I do not know who it was that sent for it who ever that sent you my name you can look to them for the pay if you have not got it and dont send it any longer."

WARTON.—This church has extended an invitation to our old esteemed friend, Rev. Thomas Reikie, and we understand that he has accepted the same, and enters upon his labours forthwith.

WATFORD is now enjoying the services of Rev. Robert Hay. Pine Grove is being supplied by a student.

LONDON.—The annual meeting of the Congregational Church was held March 23rd. Rev. H. D. Hunter, pastor, occupied the chair, who, in presenting his first annual report, referred to the pleasant, successful and happy year just passed. A review of the year's work stimulated him to greater efforts in the future. He referred with pleasure to the numerical and financial strength of the church, and its progress in these departments. There had been dismissed by letter seven persons, and three had died. The total membership was now 264, of which number fifty-nine were received into the church since the commencement of his pastorate. The deacons' report reviewed with thankfulness the events of the year and the progress of the Divine cause. Reference was made to the successful labours of the pastor, and alluded in complimentary terms to the efforts of the Ladies' Aid Society, the choir and the ushers. The Treasurer's Report for the past year ending March 23rd, 1882, reports receipts \$3,375.48, disbursements \$3,157.93. After the adoption of the financial report the audience enjoyed a tea, provided by the ladies of the congregation. The statistical Sunday School report was presented by Mr. John Bundy. Average attendance—Infants, 48; intermediate, 90; seniors, 30; officers and teachers, 22. Total, 190. Receipts during year, \$177.79. Expenses, \$120.52. Mrs. L. Malcolmson, secretary, read the annual report of the Ladies' Aid Society. Total receipts during the year \$416.55, or an increase of \$32.78 over the previous year. Expenditure, \$415.50. Balance on hand, \$1.05. Mrs. Adams, President of the Ladies' Aid Society, who is about to retire from that position, was presented with two handsome pieces of silver-ware. An appropriate address was read by Miss Johnson, and the presentation was made by Mrs. Rendell. On behalf of the recipient, Rev. Mr. Hunter briefly replied. Mr. J.

L. Payne, a representative of the young people moved, seconded by Mr. G. Davis, That by this resolution the young people of the congregation express to the pastor, Rev. H. D. Hunter, their hearty appreciation of his active interest in their behalf. Rev. Mr. Hunter next made reference to the proposition to relieve the church debt. He said the idea was to take up the loan from the company where it was at present, and secure an \$8,000 loan upon much more favourable terms from the North American Life Assurance Company. He said the amount at once required to make the first move was \$700. To this call responses were made, bringing up the amount to that required. The salary of the pastor was advanced to \$1,200 per year, to commence on April 1st.

TORONTO.—**NORTHERN.**—On Tuesday evening, April 11th, about a hundred of the young friends of this church waited upon their pastor at his residence, and as an expression of esteem and affection presented him and Mrs. Burton with a costly silver tea service, accompanied with an illuminated address. The address was from the skilled hand of Mr. J. G. Owen. A short programme of music and recitations, with refreshments the friends had brought with them, were enjoyed, a short service of praise and prayer, and the happy group departed, leaving behind an encouraged pastor and a grateful pastor's wife.

BRANTFORD.—The church building here has recently been frescoed and painted, the gas fixtures rearranged, etc. The reopening services were held on Sunday, April 2nd. At 11 a. m. the Rev. Manly Benson, the pastor of the Brant Avenue Church, occupied the pulpit. The text was from the 11th chapter of Proverbs and the 18th verse:—"To him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward." The Rev. Mr. Culter, pastor of the church, took part in the opening and closing exercises. At 4 p. m. an equally large congregation convened to listen to a service of song and brief address from the pastor, in reference to the church. In the evening the Rev. J. B. Tuttle, of the First Baptist Church, spoke to a concourse of people that filled every seat. He founded his remarks on three passages of Scripture. The first, that "Every man must bear his own burden;" second, "Bear ye one another's burden;" and third, "Cast your burden on the Lord." Individual responsibility, mutual burden-bearing, and trust in God were the lessons inculcated in a vigorous, earnest and practical discourse. As in the morning, the pastor took part in the preliminary and closing exercises. The whole passed in the most agreeable manner, and the church is to be congratulated on its hopeful condition under Mr. Culter's faithful and efficient pastorate. It may be added that the Congregational Union of Ontario and Quebec meets here in June, and the Church will then be prepared to extend a fitting welcome to that body.

HAMILTON.—This church has called Rev. John Morton, for ten years minister of the E. U. Church, Dalkeith, Scotland. Mr. Morton has accepted the invitation, and begins his labours there with the current month (May).

TORONTO.—COMMITTEE IN RE BOND STREET—A preliminary meeting of the committee was held on Friday afternoon, April 7th, in the vestry of Bond street church, at which a free conference was held with a delegation from that church, consisting of Rev. Joseph Wild, D.D. (pastor), and Messrs. Edward Beckett and Thomas Elgar (deacons). This resulted in a meeting of the pastors of the Congregational churches of the city and vicinity, with lay members, together numbering twenty persons, in a parlour of Shaftesbury Hall, on Monday evening, the 10th inst. At my motion, as convener, Geo. Hague, Esq., of Montreal, was appointed chairman of the meeting, and Charles Whitlaw, Esq., of Paris, scribe. The committee held a lengthy conference with the representatives of the churches present, extending from 8 o'clock until midnight, characterized in the main by frankness and courtesy, devotional exercises being interspersed throughout. It is to be hoped that some advance was made in mutual kindly communication. Nothing more was attempted.—EDWARD EBBS, *Convener*.

ST. JOHN, N.B.—The Rev. Irving L. Beman, formerly of Crown Point, New York, having accepted a call to the church in St. John, commenced his ministry on the 1st April. Mr. Beman is highly recommended by officers of the American Home Missionary Society. On Thursday evening, 6th April, the ladies of the church had a tea social to welcome Mr. and Mrs. Beman, and to give an opportunity for pastor and people to become acquainted.

AUSTRALIA.—News comes somewhat slowly to us from this colony, yet the following items may keep us mindful of the fact that we have brethren there. We clip from the *Victoria Independent*:—

The sixteenth annual session of the New South Wales Congregational Union was held in the last week of October. The chairman for the year 1881 is the Rev. J. T. Warlow Davies, M.A., who delivered an able address on "The State of the Colony in regard to Religion," in which he dwelt on the prevalent hindrances to the progress of Christian truth and life. Scepticism, secularism, indifference, intemperance, and larrikinism were all touched upon in wise and forceful words. The questions—"Is Christianity discredited?" "Has the pulpit lost its power?" "Are the churches to blame for the irreligion which prevails?"—were successively considered in the concluding portion of the address, which closed with the chairman's view of the part that Congregationalism was to play in the Christianization of the land.

The tone of the address was despondent, and the outlook described as gloomy; but Mr. Davies, in responding to the vote of thanks accorded to him, said he had no delight in gloomy words, but had felt constrained to utter his conviction, and he would be glad if his utterances helped to dissipate the gloom, by dealing with its causes, in our colonial life. In the course of the session two letters were read from the secretaries of the Victorian Union, one commending the Rev. J. H. Mitchell to the New South Wales Union, on his settlement at North Shore, Sydney; and the other authorizing the Rev. S. Bryant to convey the cordial greeting of the Victorian Union, and to represent it as a delegate. Mr. Bryant received a hearty reception in his representative capacity, and subsequently delivered an address at the Church Extension meeting. The annual meetings of the College, Sunday-school Union, and the reports of the Ministers' Provident Society, New South Wales *Independent* Committee, etc., evoked much interest. In connection with the subject of foreign missions, the veteran missionary, the Rev. A. W. Murray, read an important paper on the question—"Are the Congregational Churches of Australia doing their duty to the Heathen?" which was followed by an interesting discussion. The session of the Union closed with a very successful children's flower service in Pitt street Church. On Saturday, the 19th, a similar service took place in the Garden Palace, under the auspices of the Congregational Sunday-school Union, in aid of the Shetland and Orkney Relief Fund. A chorus of 2,000 children, assisted by the choirs of the city and suburban churches, rendered a service of song, and the band of H.M.S. *Wolverine* also performed. The flowers were collected at the conclusion of the service and sold, realizing upwards of £50.

The South Australian Congregational Union held its half-yearly meeting on Tuesday, October 11, in the Clayton Church, Kensington. The chairman, the Rev. T. Hope, took for the subject of his address, "The Duties and Responsibilities of a Christian Congregation," touching upon attendance at public worship, church finance, co-operation in church work, and the necessity of more complete consecration to God. The Rev. O. Copland opened a conference on "The Spiritual Life of our Churches," with an excellent address, dwelling on the essential elements of faith and love, and entering a protest against the general tendency to worldly conformity, especially in the direction of public amusements. The Rev. F. W. Cox moved, and the Rev. C. Manthorpe seconded, a resolution deprecating any change in the present system of State school education in reference to the use of the Bible in schools, which was carried by twenty-two votes against seven. The reports of the Executive Committee of the Union, of the Property

fund, and of the *S. A. Independent*, all presented features of interest and encouragement.

The Queensland Congregational Union held its twentieth annual meeting on October 24, at Ipswich. The chairman, the Rev. E. Griffith, delivered an address, in which he gave an interesting *resumé* of the twenty years' history of the Congregational Union of the colony, pointing out its manifold services, defending its policy, and indicating its possibilities of future usefulness. "From the first," says the chairman, "it was our rule not to enter on ground already occupied by evangelical Christians when the localities were thinly populated, and the occupation of them would have been but to divide and to weaken, and thus to help the adversary. Congregationalism has never been distinguished as fighting for its 'ism,' but has never shrunk from a sturdy, consistent advocacy of that Protestant liberty which maintains 'that every one must give account for himself to God.' And true to this spirit, the Union has taken its stand and regulated its actions. Starting with three churches, we have steadily advanced amidst difficulties, and to-day we report that regular services are maintained by us in upwards of forty regular places of worship, besides various preaching stations. A public meeting in advocacy of the Church extension schemes of the Union was held on October 25, at which the Revs. E. Moore, of Roma, and H. Rawlings, of Ipswich Reserve, gave interesting accounts of their labours in the country districts. The Rev. E. Greenwood, of Ipswich, was admitted a member of the Union.

OBITUARIES of the late A. Christie, Esq., and Mrs. Learmont are unavoidably crowded out, having come to hand too late.

THE CONGREGATIONAL COLLEGE.

THE CLOSING EXERCISES OF THE SESSION—AN ENCOURAGING REPORT.

The *Montreal Witness* gives the following report, which has been slightly amended:—

The closing convocation of the forty-third session of the Congregational College of British North America took place in Emmanuel Church. There was a large attendance of friends, though a snow-storm was raging. The chair was taken by the Rev. Dr. Stevenson at eight o'clock. He was assisted by the Rev. Dr. Wilkes, Principal of the College, and the Rev. J. L. Forster.

The proceedings were opened by singing the hymn, "Awake my Soul," and devotional exercises, conducted by Rev. Dr. Stevenson.

The Rev. Principal Wilkes then presented his report of the work of the past session. The undergraduates had enjoyed exceptionally good health during

the winter, and had been enabled to enter upon their work unimpeded in any way. At the regular Christmas examinations held by the faculty of McGill University the students had all acquitted themselves well, and would undoubtedly do the same in the examinations which are now going on. He enlarged upon the importance of the course in arts given at McGill for theological students, saying that it could not be superseded by any amount of strictly theological work. Another encouraging feature of the past session was the excellent spirit manifested at the weekly devotional meetings. The progress made by the theological class was very favourable, the students having met day after day and week after week in attending a regular course of lectures. His subjects had been Systematic Theology, Biblical Introduction, Homiletics, History of the Canon, and the Decalogue. This time had been most thoroughly occupied, and, in fact, they needed more time to overtake the allotted work. He adverted to the important work of Dr. Stevenson in conducting a class in the exegesis of the Greek new text, and of Mr. McFadyen as tutor in Greek. Altogether, the theological department was wonderfully in advance of years gone by, when he was a student, and had attained a position of great efficiency. With reference to the library, he said it was a valuable one, but still needed an increase, which it had hitherto been impossible to make to any considerable extent owing to the lack of funds. The Endowment Fund had now worked up to \$22,700. They needed more men of the right stamp. Five or six could be at this moment placed instead of two if they had been forthcoming.

Rev. Professor Fenwick then presented his report of the amount of work done during the session. This also was a most satisfactory statement. The examinations were very creditable, and he was happy to say that, as a body, the students had never run so high in their work at any previous period in the history of the institution. He had delivered ninety-nine afternoon and eighty-one morning lectures during the season, making in all 180. He then read the prize list, which was as follows:—

Certificates of graduation: Mr. George Skinner and Mr. George Robertson, B.A.

Prizes: Anderson prize of \$50: Mr. George Robertson.

Calvary Church silver medal: Mr. George Robertson.

Anderson prize of \$30: Mr. George Fuller, second year.

Anderson prize of \$20: Mr. Alex. Richardson, first year.

Prize for Hebrew: Mr. W. H. Way.

In regard to the prize list, Professor Fenwick said that the competition had been an unusually keen one.

Mr. Robertson had secured 1,133 marks out of a possible 1,175. Mr. Richardson had carried off the third Anderson prize in a most creditable manner.

The prizes were then presented to the successful students by the chairman, Dr. Stevenson, who made a few appropriate remarks in each case. Messrs. Skinner and Robertson were then presented with their certificates of graduation and honourable conduct.

Mr. Robertson then delivered a valedictory on behalf of the graduating class. He described the sensations experienced by a faithful student when called upon to say farewell to the *Alma Mater* at whose hands he has received his education, and the numberless associations connected with college life. The occasion which they had all met to celebrate that evening was one to which he had been anxiously looking forward during the past four years—sometimes with hopefulness, but very often with somewhat different feelings. The goal had been reached, however, and he and his comrade were prepared to enter upon their work—a glorious one, and one that all who engaged in it might be proud of. One advantage that students of 1882 had to be thankful for was that their lot had been cast in Montreal, where there were so many hospitable families ready and willing to receive and encourage the student. The training acquired in the Arts faculty of McGill University was also of inestimable value in training and polishing the student. Many rough spots had been smoothed away; many peculiarities had been toned down, and many ideas had been gained, not only by the class work, but through the intercourse which it afforded them with young men from all parts of the Dominion. A valuable training had also been obtained through attending the city churches and listening to the eloquent sermons preached every Sunday by the clergymen of all denominations. During his College course he had witnessed many changes. The college itself had been removed from the old historic Zion Church, and he hoped that another move would shortly be made, for the last time, into a new and permanent resting place. The first \$20,000 endowment had been completed, and the nucleus of another toward the building of the college had been begun. He concluded by bidding all his hearers farewell in appropriate terms.

A collection was then taken up in aid of the College library, after which Dr. Cornish made a short address. He said he was happy to be able to congratulate the prize winners, and especially Messrs. Robertson and Skinner, upon their success. He would warn them, however, against thinking that they had finished the course, and advised them to devote as much time as possible to private reading. He dwelt upon the utility of the McGill course to theological students, and referred to the pressing necessity of a College building.

They had already between \$16,000 and \$17,000 subscribed for this purpose.

The Rev. J. L. Forster, of Calvary Church, then made a few remarks, giving some valuable advice to the graduates as to their future course.

Mr. George Hague also made a few remarks, after which the meeting was brought to a close with the singing of a hymn and the pronouncing of the benediction by the Rev. Dr. Stevenson.

Official.

CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF ONTARIO AND QUEBEC.

The annual meeting of this body will be held, according to adjournment, in the Congregational church in Brantford, commencing on Wednesday, June 7th, at 7:30 p.m., when the annual sermon will be preached.

The Churches connected with the Union are respectfully reminded of the twelfth Standing Rule, according to which each congregation is expected to take up a collection on behalf of its funds on or before the first Sabbath of June, and forward it to the Secretary-Treasurer, at the annual meeting in Brantford. These collections will, it is hoped, be *liberal*, as the travelling expenses will be unusually heavy, and there are some large outstanding bills for printing which must be met before the fares of members and delegates can be paid. (See amended Standing Rule, page 91, Year Book for 1881-2)

Arrangements are being made with several of the railway companies for reduced fares, which will probably be the same as in previous years, viz., a fare and a third for the double journey, on presenting a certificate of intention to be present, signed by myself, on purchasing ticket. The Richelieu and Ontario Navigation Company will, no doubt, make the usual reductions. Particulars will be given afterwards. When sending for certificates, please say by what lines you intend to travel.

Brethren appointed to prepare papers to be read at the Union will please make note of the fact, and govern themselves accordingly. (See page 89, Cong. Year Book for 1881-2)

The Committee of the Union will meet in the vestry of the church on Wednesday morning, June 7th, at 11 o'clock.

JOHN WOOD,

Sec'y Cong. Union Ontario and Quebec.

Ottawa, April 19th 1882.

The Committee of the Brantford Church in making provision for accommodation during the Union meetings, request that not later than 15th May the names of all delegates expecting to be in attendance be sent to Mr. Geo. A. Adams, Secretary, Box 17, Brantford. Our friends will greatly aid the committee in their duties by paying prompt attention to this notice.

Literary Notices.

A FRUITFUL LIFE: The Biography of the late Stephen Paxson, missionary of the American Sunday-School Union. 12mo, cloth, 220pp., with portraits and illustrations. Price \$1.25. The American Sunday-School Union, 1122 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.—This is a pleasing and loving memoir by a daughter of one who was in manhood won by the chaste conversation of a Christian wife, and led by a little child, to find in life a reality and a mission. With indomitable will and a sturdy constitution, defective speech, scanty educational advantages were no hindrances when the soul was fired with a lofty ideal. For forty years Stephen Paxson laboured in the Mississippi Valley, planting Sunday schools in the wilderness and confirming the schools already established. The following anecdote illustrates his untiring energy. In a log school house in Missouri, after speaking on behalf of a Sabbath school, a man from the audience arose, requesting permission to speak. This was his speech, as he pointed to Mr. Paxson:—"I've seen that chap before. I used to live in Illinois, and that man came there to start a school. I told my wife when Sunday schools came round game got scarce, and that I would not go to his school or let my folks go. A railroad coming along, I sold out and moved to Pike county. I hadn't been there more than six months before that same chap came to start a Sunday school. I said to my wife, "That Sunday school fellow is about; I guess we'll move on." I came to Missouri. Missouri is a fine State, game plenty, and no Sunday school. Day before yesterday I heard there was to be a Sunday school lecture here by some stranger. Says I to my wife, "I wonder is it that Illinoisian?" I came myself to see, and, neighbours, *It's the very same chap!*" The man put his hand in his pocket, took out a dollar, laid it down, and continued: "That'll help buy a library—for, neighbours, if I should move to Oregon or California, I'd expect to see that chap there in less than a year. I'm freed." The narrative is well written, full of interest, stimulating in the best degree. We commend it to all Sunday schools and homes. It is not a religious novel, but a simple story, not only of a fruitful but of an heroic life, as intensely interesting as any record of battle, and far more fitted to inculcate Christian endurance.

A STRIKING portrait of James Russell Lowell is the frontispiece of *The Century Magazine* for May, which also contains a masterly study, by Edmund Clarence Stedman, of the life and writings of the author of "The Biglow Papers." The same number of the magazine will offer also a recently written poem by Mr. Lowell, entitled "Estrangement." Carlyle's posthumous work, "Reminiscences of my Irish Journey," will be begun in the May *Century*, and com-

pleted in June and July. Those who have had access to the manuscript and advance sheets of the work describe it as being as characteristic of the author as the famous "Reminiscences" which a year ago made such a sensation in literary circles.

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE of April 8 contains: Sir Charles Lyell, *Quarterly*; Miss Ferrier's Yellowstone Geysers, *Nineteenth Century*; Jane Austin, *Temple Bar*; On the Whale Fishery of the Basque Provinces of Spain, and American Ants, *Nature*; A Famous Quaker School, *All the Year Round*; and the usual amount of poetry. A new volume begins with this number. For fifty-two numbers of sixty-four large pages each (or more than 3,300 pages a year), the subscription price (\$8) is low; while for \$10.50 the publishers offer to send any one of the American \$4 monthlies or weeklies with *The Living Age* for a year, both postpaid. Littell & Co., Boston, are the publishers.

JUBILEE OF THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF ENGLAND AND WALES. (Hodder & Stoughton, London).—This goodly volume of 450 pages, closely printed, has landed us again on the platform of the Free Trade Hall in Manchester, amid fathers and brethren and friends in enthusiastic joyous company, and in the quiet Christian home at Heaton Mersey, where all that kindness and attention could do was with true English hospitality done to make our Manchester visit among the most pleasing memories of a lifetime so surely hurrying on. The busy city, the crowded hall, the stirring speeches, the chairman's stately mien and the secretary's busy but ever kindly face are all before us as we write, with the hedgerows and rural sweetness of the suburb where a few minutes' whirl in the railway carriage brought back a sense of home. But this is not the book. The Committee of the English Union (we would quietly ask, is Dr. Hannay the committee in the editing of this work? We heard him called Dictator,) have acted wisely in giving permanent form to the proceedings of the Jubilee gathering; the addresses for the most part deserve to be preserved, and are worthy of being studied. The circulation of this book among our Canadian Churches would do much towards educating in sterling Congregational principles and imbuing with an enthusiastic spirit. It gives at length the principal papers, including Dr. Allon's address, and Mr. Baldwin Brown's inspiring sermon, Dr. Dale's noble speech on the fifty years represented at the Jubilee, and Mr. Griffith John's unexcelled appeal on behalf of missions. It ought to be laid down here for about ninety cents, and we should be glad to facilitate orders for what ought to be a household memento of our sympathy with our brethren in the old land.

JOHN'S APOCALYPSE, by H. Browne, M.A., M.D. (Tubbs, Brook & Chrystal, Manchester).—This work is

the realization of a lifelong endeavour to interpret spiritually this wondrous book. They who have the pleasure of knowing the author as a personal friend, as the editor has, can but feel drawn to the spirit of the book, whatever opinion may be entertained as to the interpretations given. To us the most suggestive part of the work is the honest endeavour at a literal translation, irrespective of seeming uncouthness. We say suggestive, for the sentences enter and provoke thought. Take as an example the familiar twentieth verse of the third chapter, "Behold I—am—standing at the door and am—knocking, if—so—be anyone shall—have—heard My voice and shall—have—opened the door, I—will also—come—in towards him and will sup—along—with him and he along—with Me." To Dr. Browne every word bears a spiritual message and practical to the churches and to men, and a mine of spiritual truth (though often, according to our view, not logically to be found in the verses commented on) rewards the prayerful reader of the work.

THE HOMILETIC MONTHLY for April (Funk & Wagnalls, New York) is with us again. We note its chief contents: Sermonic:—"Sin and its Reproof," by Joseph T. Duryea, D.D.; "Difficulties of the Preacher," by Rev. Henry Ward Beecher; "No Waste in Love," by Joseph Parker, D.D.; "Salvation and its Adjuncts," by William Booth, D.D.; An Anniversary Service: "Gratitude and Hopefulness," by T. De Witt Talmage, D.D. Then we have the following papers: "Light on Important Texts," by Howard Crosby, D.D.; "Preaching to Children," by Rev. W. F. Crafts; "Indexing a Clergyman's Library," by J. Stamford Holme, D.D.; "Lectures to My Students," by Rev. Charles H. Spurgeon. The magazine is full of interest and instruction to clergymen and other students of Scripture. Price \$2.50 per year; single number, 25 cents.

JOB'S COMFORTERS, by Joseph Parker, D.D., is a publication in pamphlet form of an article we noticed last month in the *Homiletic Monthly*, in which Huxley the Molecularite, John Stuart the Millite, and Tyndall the Sadducee, attempt to comfort Job. It is published at ten cents, and is a capital satire, as the following note from Prof. Tyndall himself testifies: "About six months ago I was staying with some friends at Heathfield Park, when 'Job and His Comforters' reached my hands. Despite the serious ground-tone of the little book, I could not help joining my friends in their outbursts of laughter over its dramatic drollery."

BEWARE OF THE SNAKE.

You have heard of "the snake in the grass," my boy,
Of the terrible snake in the grass;
But now you must know
Man's deadliest foe
Is a snake of a different class.
Alas!
'Tis the venomous snake in the glass.

International Lessons

May 14, 1882. } THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES. { Mark 8 1-21.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy."—Luke 12 : 1.

TIME.—Not long after the last lesson; probably in the summer of A. D. 29.

PLACE.—Vers. 1-9. The scene of the last miracle, some part of Decapolis. Vers. 10-13. Dalmanutha, a small place not shown on most maps, near Magdala. Vers. 14-21. On the lake, during the return voyage to the eastern side.

PARALLEL.—Matt. 15 : 32 ; 16 : 12.

Notes and Comments.—Vers. 1-9. The incidents are in the main so like those recorded in Lesson III. of this quarter (for which see last INDEPENDENT), that no lengthened notes are needed, only on a few points of difference. Jesus was in another part of the country. He was a stranger, doubtless, to the bulk of those gathered together, some of whom, attracted by rumour, came from far. Here there was no chance of their procuring food in the towns and villages—they were too far away. The first miracle was performed at the close of the first day—here they had been three days with Jesus. The disciples had before them the remembrance of the first feeding of the multitude, but possibly they thought that He might not wish to repeat the miracle, and they evidently feared to ask Him. Although the disciples took up fewer basketsfull of fragments than when the greater number were fed, yet they were a different kind of basket—larger, made of rope, such as that in which Paul was lowered from the walls of Damascus.

Ver. 10. "Dalmanutha," coasts of Magdala. Matt. 15 : 39.

Ver. 11. "Pharisees." The Sadducees were with them. Matt. 16 : 1, hatred of Jesus the only bond between these factions; "began;" after some respite. "Sign from heaven:" had He not given them many on earth? They had more than once before made the same demand. Matt. 12 : 38 ; John 2 : 18. But would they have believed? Luke 16 : 31. This was like the wilderness temptation, "If thou be the Son of God."

Ver. 12. "Sighed deeply:" when Jesus healed the deaf man in the previous chapter, he sighed, here deeply, so we may suppose that sin grieved Him more than even suffering. See Ps. 119 : 53, 136. "No sign be given;" Matt. adds: (16 : 4) "but the sign of the prophet Jonas," alluding to his resurrection; and so it was that multitudes were converted through that and the outpouring of the Spirit which followed.

Ver. 13. "Left them:" i.e., the Pharisees. Christ never left the people that way; a strong expression, implying more than a going away—it was a giving up. Hosea 4 : 17. "Other side:" eastern, and landing, went on to Caesarea Philippi.

Ver. 14. "Had forgotten:" doubtless in the excitement of their leaving; "one loaf:" such loaves were not sufficient for a meal for even one man.

Vers. 15, 16. Jesus was thinking of one thing, the disciples of another, so they interpreted His words by their thoughts. "Beware of the leaven—Pharisees:" formal religion; "Sadducees:" (so Matthew) scepticism; "Herod:" worldliness; to all these things they were exposed, and of them they were to beware. And the poor disciples thought that He was alluding to their lack of bread, that they might have to buy, and it might be made with wrong leaven!

Vers. 17, 18. Jesus rebukes them strongly, yet tenderly, for their want of understanding, and their want of faith.

Matt. 16 : 8, so ver. 21 : there are no less than nine questions put by the Saviour to the disciples, to show them how foolish and sinful their thoughts ; " heart yet hardened : " and that affects sight, hearing, and memory.

Vers. 19-21. In this conversation we see how the Master led His disciples on to see and feel the truth. He did not tell them what he meant, but suggested the train of thought by which finally they came to understand, to feel that He was speaking of another heaven, and that while with Him they could never want. Matt. says (16 : 12) " then understood they : " the light broke into their dull minds. If in nothing else, we have in the dullness of the Apostles to understand spiritual things, plenty of their successors to-day.

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Dangers.—Thinking that because you have had a similar miracle previously, there is nothing to teach. It is surprising to hear teachers say that they can't find anything in the lessons—that they don't know what to teach, when every portion is so rich and full. Even if in this lesson you pass entirely over the feeding of the multitude, there is plenty to fill your hour full to overflowing—only study.

WHAT AND HOW TO TEACH.

Topical Analysis.—(1) The feeding of the four thousand (vers. 1-9). (2) A sign from heaven asked and refused (10-13). (3) A charge, a misunderstanding, and a rebuke (14-21.)

On the *first* topic we may take a different line of thought and teaching to that suggested in the former similar miracle. You may show how the miracle had its birth in the *compassion* of Jesus, its manifestation in His *power*. Carry on the thoughts of your scholars to the teaching that this miracle was only an epitome, so to speak, of the miracle of daily life ; that the bread we eat is, in its quickening and growth, as true a token of the power and care of God as the sudden multiplication of the loaves and fishes, that every field waving with golden corn is as real a miracle as this ; that as Christ taught by His example to acknowledge the Source and Giver of food, we should ever remember the truth, and imitate His example. Further, that we need never fear to ask for fresh mercies ; His store is boundless, His ability is all-powerful, while His compassion and love are like Himself—eternal.

On the *second* topic you may show how unbelief hardens ; that notwithstanding the many miracles Christ had wrought—*convincing proof of His mission to all open to conviction*—these Pharisees blasphemously wanted a sign of their own choosing ; they would dictate what God should do. Show that there was given then, and to-day, all things necessary for salvation—proofs so full and complete that those who will not believe with these, would not if one rose from the dead. Show how unbelief grieved the Saviour, sighing here and weeping elsewhere, and that as it was possible to grieve Him in the days of His flesh, it is possible to grieve Him now through His Holy Spirit.—Eph. 4 : 30.

On the *third* topic teach how slow to understand spiritual things is the natural man. These disciples, before the giving of the Holy Spirit, were dull of heart, blundering constantly, misunderstanding their Master, forgetful of the teachings of His miracles. So likewise to-day, those whose minds are not enlightened from on high cannot understand the things of God. Pray for teaching and light. In the words of Christ, let us learn and teach to beware of the three great foes of faith—worldliness, scepticism, and formality. To all these our scholars are exposed.

Incidental Lessons.—That our daily life is a daily miracle of power and of love.

That this was an unasked-for miracle, so we constantly receive blessings unsought.

That Christ can supply all our needs. He " is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." —Eph. 3 : 20.

The fragments, the superabundance of blessing, a testimony against distrust and unbelief.

That the natural man understandeth not the things of God.

Main Lessons.—That He who fed the multitude cares for and compassionates us.—Matt. 6 : 25, 26 ; Phil. 4 : 6 ; 1 Pet. 5 : 7.

That the teachings of the Bible contain all things necessary for salvation, and these testify of Christ ; he who will not receive these would not believe a sign from heaven. John 5 : 39 ; Luke 16 : 29-31 ; 2 Tim. 3 : 16.

Evil is like leaven, spreading and corrupting heart and life alike. Beware of it.—1 Cor. 5 : 6, 7 ; 15 : 33 ; 2 Tim. 2 : 16-18.

SEEING AND CONFESSING CHRIST.

May 21, }
1882. }

{ Mark 8 :
22-33. }

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."—Matt. 16 : 16.

TIME.—In the summer of A. D. 29, following the last lesson at a short interval.

PLACE.—Vers. 22-26 : took place in Bethsaida Julias, at the north-east end of the Sea of Galilee ; the place which some writers suppose was the only Bethsaida. Vers. 27-33 : on the way from there to Caesarea Philippi, about twenty-five miles north, and not far from the Hermon range.

PARALLEL.—Vers. 22-26 ; not recorded by the other Evangelists : with vers. 27-33 ; Matt. 16 : 13-23 ; Luke 9 : 18-22.

Notes and Comments.—Ver. 22. "Bethsaida:" Julias, so named by the tetrarch Philip, in honour of the daughter of Augustus. "A blind man:" evidently not born blind, as he knew forms.—Ver. 24. "To touch:" this was generally the idea the people had, He must touch.

Ver. 23. "Took—by the hand—led—out of the town:" actions beautiful and suggestive ; gentle, condescending, and doubtless fitted for the new revelation to come to the man ; likely it was the test and discipline of his faith. "Spit on his eyes:" to the deaf an Jesus spoke by his sense of sight, to this man by touch. See similar miracle in John 9. Christ evidently did not wish the miracle made known in Bethsaida—see ver. 26. "Saw ought:" aught, anything.

Ver. 24. "I see men:" REV. "for I beheld them as trees walking:" that is, the figures were undefined, indistinct ; it appears by the next verse the miracle was not yet complete.

Ver. 25. Now the miracle is perfect, "put his hands again:" the only instance of a gradual cure. Bring out the various methods of Christ's healing. "Saw every man:" REV. "all things."

Ver. 26. The healed man did not belong to Bethsaida ; he was to go to his house, yet not into the town, neither to tell it (the miracle) to anyone in the town. Last clause omitted in REV. Note, however, that Christ does not forbid his telling it at home.

Vers. 27, 28. Read this following narrative in the parallel passages, and you will see how, in this, the points most to the honour of Peter are kept back, one of the many

similar facts pointing to his share in the authorship of this Gospel. "Cæarea Philippi:" then newly built, not elsewhere named except in parallel. "Whom do men say that I (Matt. 'the Son of man') am?" What is the general effect upon people of my miracles and teaching? "John the Baptist:" so had thought Herod and others. "Elias:" evidently suggested by Malachi 4: 5; so chap. 6: 15. "One of the prophets:" in Matt. "Jeremias," in ancient Hebrew Bibles Jeremiah was placed before Isaiah.

Ver. 29. "Whom say ye?" that the important point. The critical moment, the crucial test of confession has come. The answer is not delayed—Peter, first, foremost, fervent, becomes the mouth of the twelve, and utters the glorious truth, not I, or we, think, or hope, but "Thou art:" what? "The Christ, the Messiah, the anointed of God, and more than that, taking Matthew's version, "the Son of the living God:" Divine. It was a revelation to Peter. Matt. 16: 17.

Ver. 30. "Tell no man:" why? This was a time for silence and patience; the disciples themselves, as appears immediately, were not prepared to face the full force of their confession; they had much to learn yet; and because the people would not give up their carnal idea of a worldly, conquering Messiah.

Ver. 31. "Must suffer:" Jesus had given intimations before. Matt. 10: 38; John 2: 4; 7: 6. Now he makes a distinct announcement of his coming sufferings, and of the shape they would take. "Elders:" Sanhedrim; "chief priests:" the heads of the twenty-four classes into which the priesthood was divided. "Rise again:" plain as this statement was, as plain as of his death, the disciples did not understand or receive it.

Vers. 32, 33. Peter, somewhat elated by what Christ had previously said to him, proceeded to "rebuke Him," call Him to account, find fault with Him; he wanted to show himself wiser than the Master, and in this he has plenty of imitators; many to-day object to the Cross of Christ. But the rebuker was rebuked; "Get—behind—Satan:" adversary. Not the personal incarnation of evil, he was doing the devil's work though; "thou savourest not:" REV. "mindest not:" so Rom. 12: 16, same word, "mind not high things:" and so elsewhere. "God—men:" God's idea was a suffering Saviour; man's, a conquering Messiah. Peter had this.

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Dangers.—While we always urge that the parallel passages be read, and any light they throw upon the narrative be utilized, there is occasionally matter in these other accounts which it may be just as well to omit in teaching. It is so here. In Matthew's version of the confession of Peter, there is included that passage round which controversy has raged for centuries: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church," etc. While there is no reasonable doubt as to the true meaning of the passage, and that Romanist claims built upon it are on a foundation of sand, it would not be wise to introduce such a controversial subject. If, however, it is introduced, as it may be in elder classes, do not be afraid to face it with an assurance of its spiritual, and not ecclesiastical meaning.

WHAT AND HOW TO TEACH.

Topical Analysis.—(1) The healing of the blind man, vers. 22-26. (2) About Christ. The opinions of the people. The confession of the disciples.—Vers. 27-30. (3) Foreshadowings of His death and resurrection.—Vers. 31-33.

PREFATORY.—Note should be taken by the teacher of the circumstances leading up to each lesson, of the place, surroundings, influences at work, and other things upon which much of its speciality may rest. Here we have a plainer declaration of His Messiahship asked for by Christ than He

had ever permitted to be spoken before; but now they were alone, with none to carry away and distort, and it was drawing near to the time of the end, when the faith of the disciples would need all the strength that it could gather for the tremendous strain that the death of their Master would put upon it. They must understand—more, must confess—that He was indeed the Christ, then He could prepare them for what was to follow.

On the *first* topic bring out the details of the healing of the blind man, all of which are instructive. Whether the man had himself faith in Jesus, is not very clear; it was his friends who brought him to the Healer, and it was they who "brought Him to touch him." The mode of healing may have had something to do with the state of the man's faith. The cure was gradual, possibly because the growth of faith was gradual. This has its counterpart in the spiritual enlightening of the dark understanding; it is often gradual, men grow up into truth and light and understanding. Teach here that Jesus has many modes of healing the souls of men, and that we must not doubt that it is His working because it differs from our own experience, or what we have seen in others.

On the *second* topic impress the truth that this question, which appears elsewhere in another form, "What think ye of Christ?" Matt. 22: 42, is the most solemn and important which man is called upon to answer; one upon which the most tremendous results hang, and one which every one who hears of Jesus *must* answer. Show that the diversity of opinions there represents the unbelief of to-day. Men for various reasons—pride, hatred, superstition, worldliness—refused to acknowledge the Christ, the Saviour then, they do so still. But press the point that it is the YE that is all-important—not what others say or think, but "whom say ye?" and upon the right answer to this question, and the right acting upon it, the immortal future depends. Christ is with us now, His claims are before us; press your scholars to answer to their conscience and God, and pray that God may help them to the faith of Peter, and enable them to reply, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!"

On the *third* topic show how lovingly the Master was preparing His disciples for the great trial that was to come upon them. He had before given obscure intimations of His death to a wider circle of His hearers, now to the disciples He speaks plainly. It was a hard and an unwelcome lesson for them to learn, and speaking through Peter they remonstrated with Jesus for His words. Carnal yet, how slowly they came to see and know the truths of the spirituality of Christ's kingdom. Teach here, that so necessary a part in the work of the Saviour is the Cross, that he who would take it away is an adversary both of Christ and man.

Incidental Lessons.—On the *first* topic.—That Christ can heal and save in many ways. He can give sight to the spiritually blind.

On the *second* topic.—That Christ is the one all-important subject of man's thoughts.

That a mistake in our thoughts of Christ may be fatal.

A question that every man must answer (ver. 29).

This first confession of Christ the foundation of the kingdom of heaven.

On the *third* topic.—The Lord times His teaching to the needs of His servants (ver. 31).

That carnal ideas of Christ are ever opposed to the purposes and plans of God.

That all so opposing are the servants of Satan.

After sufferings, after death, the resurrection.

Main Lessons.—We should be ready to confess Christ.—Matt. 10: 32; John 6: 68, 69; Rom. 10: 9.

The Cross of Christ—the purpose of God—a stumbling block to man.—Isaiah 53: 8; Acts 2: 23; 1 Cor. 1: 18, 22, 23.

May 28, }
1882 }

FOLLOWING CHRIST.

{ Mark 8 :
34 . to 9 : 1 }

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me."—Ver. 34

TIME.—Soon after the last lesson.

PLACE.—Caesarea Philippi.

PARALLEL.—Matt. 16 : 24-28 : Luke 9 : 23-27.

Notes and Comments.—Ver. 34. This verse gives a striking idea of the popularity of Jesus; in this distant place there was a "multitude" (REV. reading) following Him; "disciples also." they, too, must receive the teaching; the law of self-denial and suffering. "Come after me : " He will have them understand what it means, and involves "cross : " as He had foreshadowed that He must do. The person to be crucified bore his own cross. " Follow me." a glorious procession.—The Master with His cross leading, the servants, each with his special cross following, their faces towards the true kingdom.

Ver. 25. A paradox, and yet how true, "lose ; " "save : " If I value this present life so highly as to sacrifice for it my service to God and Christ, I lose the eternal life which the Father giveth to His children. Note that the emphasis is on the " will save " determined at all hazards. " Will lose : " here " shall " would be the more correct word, as it stands for the simple future.

Vers. 36, 37. " What shall it profit ? " If he should gain the whole world, this should not pay him for the loss of his soul—life eternal. For " soul " in both these verses REV. reads " life." The word has the double meaning, " life " and " soul ; " but here " life " in the higher sense is meant, not the " soul " as distinguished from the body. The commonly understood truth is not suggested here. " What—give—exchange : " the ransom-price, nothing. Of all miserable mistakes, the most miserable.

Ver. 38. " Whosoever—ashamed : " this primarily for the Jews, who looked for a Messiah of pomp and power; for us also, if for any reason we are " ashamed of Jesus." " Adulterous—sinful ; " heart estranged from God. Isa. 54 : 5 ; Jer. 31 : 32. " Of him, etc. : " the one is the natural outcome of the other; he who is ashamed of his Saviour acts shamefully to Him and invites shame and " everlasting contempt : " Dan. 12 : 2. " When He cometh in the glory of His Father : " so the glory of the Son will be the same as the glory of the Father. " Holy angels : " spectators of the shame. Oh, mad and miserable man.—See 2 Thess. 1 : 7-10 ; 2 Cor. 5 : 10 ; 9 : 1. The break by beginning a new chapter is avoided in the REV. ; it is all in one paragraph. " Taste death " figure of a bitter cup, lit. shall not die ; it was a familiar Jewish metaphor. See John 8 : 52 ; Heb. 2 : 9. So that what follows was to happen in the natural life-time of some present. " Kingdom of God : " His cause on earth. " With power : " it might appear feeble then ; these were the days of humiliation ; but power came at Pentecost, Acts 1 : 8 ; 2 : 3, 4, and some lived to see the triumphs of the Gospel in Asia, Rome, Greece, and a large part of the then known world.

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

What and How to Teach—Topical analysis : The central thought is following Christ as the title, and we have (1) The essentials of following Christ (ver. 34) ; (2) The motives to following Christ (35-9 : 1).

The first topic, although it rests upon one verse, is very full of thought, and demands careful and earnest teaching ; and in teaching we must give prominence to the truth that these essentials are just the same to-day as in the days of the

Saviour. What was needed then is needed now. In whatever shape it may come, there must be an entire giving up of self to the will of the Master. Show the right of Christ to be followed ; that He is the Captain of our salvation ; the Leader greater than Moses to guide us across the wilderness to the Canaan beyond. He claims the right. Again and again we have Him giving the command, " Follow Me," " Take My yoke upon you," and such utterances. Then he who " will " follow Christ, must understand that it means (1) *Self-denial.*—The follower must " deny himself." Point out the true meaning of this. Some would teach that it involves a renouncing of faith in self for salvation—a great truth, but not the truth of the verse. He must be content to follow ; must crucify his pride and independence ; rejoice to be even a servant of Christ ; must deny the desires that would lead him away from the right path ; must be content to take suffering, privation, poverty, loss of friends, scoffing, contempt—*yea, death itself* if it should come in the way of duty. (2) *Cross bearing.*—The symbol of all this is taking up the cross ; just as the Master did—at the cost of the most painful death, if need be. Show your class that as the greater includes the less, so we must be prepared to make sacrifices, to deny ourselves the little things that would keep us from obeying and following Jesus ; and this is to be done, as Luke adds, " daily." Learn, practise, teach this all-important lesson.

On the second topic show that the motives stretch away into eternity. They have reference to *life*, to *profit*, to *honour* : eternal life, eternal profit, eternal honour. Teach that he who follows Christ follows Him who alone can give life—the life that is worth living—eternal life. All sacrifice for Christ's sake has connected with it the highest of blessings (see Matt. 5 : 11, 12 ; Luke 18 : 29, 30). There is *life* ; for although a man may in the earthly sense lose it for Christ's and His Gospel's sake, yet in the truer—the heavenly sense—he shall save it. It is *profit* ; not the profit of that which moth and rust doth corrupt and thieves steal, but profit eternal. It is *honour* ; for it is to share in the glory of Christ (Matt. 19 : 28) ; to be owned by Him, honoured by His Father, and be where He is. (John 12 : 26.)

Every teacher should endeavour to simplify these truths, if needed, and so far as needed, to the capacity of his class. The wise teacher will know his class, and just how to present truth to them. Show that the youngest have to follow Jesus ; that in their lives may come occasions of self-denial, small, perhaps, as looked at by their elders, but great to them ; that they must be willing to do this for the Saviour's sake, and that all the blessings He promised will be theirs.

Incidental Lessons.—That the following of Jesus means self-denial.

That Christ-serving brings cross-bearing.

The cross of Christ—what He did for us—our cross. What we are ready to do for Him.

That the path of exaltation runs through humiliation.

The Christian course : through defeat to victory ; through the cross to the crown ; death to life ; shame to glory.

That life-saving may be soul losing.

" What shall it profit ? " Another all-important question.

That the loss of the soul can never be repaired.

That we should not be ashamed of Jesus.

That shame brings shame—we of Jesus, He of us, in the day of His glorious manifestation.

Main Lessons.—On following Jesus.—(1) That it may bring loss and suffering in this life, John 5 : 18-21 ; Phil. 1 : 29 ; 2 Tim. 3 : 12 ; 1 Pet. 4 : 12. (2) But it will bring glory in the immortal life, Matt. 25 : 34-46 ; Rom. 8 : 17-19 ; 2 Cor. 4 : 17 ; 2 Tim. 4 : 8 ; Rev. 7 : 9, 13-17.

John 4: }
1882. }

THE TRANSFIGURATION.

{ Mark 9:
2-13. }

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."—Matt. 3: 17.

TIME.—A week after last lesson.

PLACE.—Unknown. Mount Hermon it is now generally supposed, but Tabor was the traditional site; there are many difficulties in the way of accepting the latter which do not affect the former. Hermon is north of Caesarea Philippi, Tabor is about five or six miles east of Nazareth; by the ordinary route they are probably sixty-five miles apart.

PARALLEL.—Matt. 17: 1-13; Luke 9: 28-36.

Notes and Comments.—Ver. 2. "Six days:" so Matt. Luke says, "about an eight days:" counting the fractions of the two days at the beginning and end of the period. "Peter," etc.: the select three on other occasions (chap. 14: 33; 5: 37); "high mountain:" see on "place" above. "By themselves:" what for? Luke tells us "to pray" (9: 28). This as well as the fact that the disciples were heavy with sleep, and that they did not come down from the mountain until the next day, points to the scene having taken place in the night. "Transfigured:" changed, transformed. "Before them:" these were witnesses of the miracle.

Ver. 3. "Garments:" Matt. and Luke speak first of the change in His countenance, Mark dwells on the garments, the inner glory burst through the earthly covering. "White as snow—no fuller:" indicating the supernatural character of the event. In ancient times but few coloured garments were worn, and the fuller's business was to make the white clean and bright. Persons of high rank were often distinguished by the brightness of their white garments.

Ver. 4. "Elias with Moses:" representing the Law and the Prophets. Both were forerunners of Christ; each had fasted forty days; one never tasted death, the other died alone with God, and was buried by Him. "Talked:" about "His decease:" Luke 9: 31; His exodus—going forth—the one, great central thought of the universe.

Vers. 5, 6. "Peter:" impulsive as usual; "it is good:" so it was. Christ and the two great saints of old in converse, how good! it was Heaven ante-dated, and so was but for a season. There was something better, however, as Peter hid to learn. "Tabernacles:" tents or booths. "Wist not:" knew not; he was overcome with what he saw, and spoke he knew not what. "Sore afraid:" the whole scene might well produce the deepest awe.

Ver. 7. "A cloud:" Matt. (17: 5) "a bright cloud:" how different to the cloud on Sinai, Ex. 19: 16-18, just the difference between the two dispensations. A cloud was, through the O. T. dispensation, a symbol of the presence of God. "Overshadowed them:" i.e., Christ, Moses, and Elias. "A voice:" of the Father, so the cloud was the true Shekinah. See Matt. 3: 17; John 12: 38, the Divine testimony to Jesus. "Beloved Son:" a confirmation of Peter's confession. "Hear him:" the sum of the Law and the Prophets. Hearing Christ includes obeying Him.

Ver. 8. And now the visitants disappear, they have been lost in the cloud, their office is past, and "Jesus only" remains. Some details found in Matthew are omitted here. "Jesus only:" Heaven upon earth, and the joy of the heaven beyond.

Ver. 9. "Charged them:" why? *Trench* says "The mystery of Christ's Sonship should not be revealed to the world till He was declared to be the Son of God, with power, by the resurrection from the dead."

Ver. 10. "Kept that saying:" the injunction just given. "Questioning:" not about the resurrection generally, for

that was an article of faith among the orthodox Jews, but about the connection of the resurrection of Jesus with the declaration of Him. What did it mean?

Ver. 11. This question of the disciples was the outcome of the thoughts produced by what they had seen and heard on the mount; they felt that their Master was the promised Christ. So far as they understood, Elias had not come, and yet the scribes taught that before the Messiah, came Elijah the messenger; the scribes used this against the claims of Christ.

Vers. 12, 13. Jesus answered them, "Elias verily cometh first:" "Elias is indeed come:" (the Rev. properly, here as elsewhere, gives the O. T. form of the name "Elijah;" the variation is confusing). The prophecy (Malachi 4: 5) was fulfilled in John the Baptist: Matt. 17: 11-13, "how it is written:" Rev. "how is it:" making the sentence a question, answering the difficulty raised by the scribes with another. Let them interpret the prophecies of suffering and death; "they have done as it is written." There is no direct prophecy of the sufferings of the second Elijah, but it might be inferred that he would suffer as his prototype had done. Matthew says (17: 13), "Then the disciples understood that He spake unto them of John the Baptist."

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Dangers.—One is similar to that cautioned against in a previous lesson (May 7), and which to some extent is common to all these narratives from the life of Christ, that the charm of the story should hold attention from the great foundation truths. Another is to take it for certain that your scholars know all about Moses and Elias, and why they especially should be here; question and explain so far as needed.

WHAT AND HOW TO TEACH.

A grand lesson this, fitly following and completing the last; that was about the Cross, this the reward; that about losing life and saving life, this shows the glory of the saved life, for not only was Christ glorious, but the two human visitants were glorious also: Luke 9: 31. In connection with this thought, read and apply 1 John 3: 2. It is a brief lifting of the veil for the assurance of the disciples, and, it may be, to comfort and strengthen even the Saviour Himself.

Topical Analysis.—(1) The narrative of the transfiguration (vers. 2-8). (2) Questions and teachings about the event (vers. 9-13).

On the first topic we may note a reason for the wonderful event. Christ had begun to speak plainly, as He had not spoken before, of His death. This had staggered the disciples; Peter had even dared to rebuke Him for it. Then He had been speaking of His followers each "taking up his cross:" words which had a significance to the disciples of shame and suffering. We know that they were perplexed and discouraged, and now this manifestation of the glory of their Master—this Divine testimony to Him—would, and did, help them in the trials that yet were before them. Dwell on the fact that it was as He was praying that the wonderful change came upon Him. So it was that when Moses was alone with God that his face shone so that the children of Israel could not look upon it. Prayer transforms the man, always spiritually, sometimes outwardly too. The marks of communion are in the walk and life; the countenance, the voice, the manner, will tell of prayerful communion with God. Show that Christ prayed oft; that He needed prayer, and that in prayer came to Him the testimony of the Father. The application is plain. Do not, however, omit to teach that prayer is but the preparation for work. Peter forgot that, and wanted to remain on the mount; he wanted to enter at once into the rest which was not to come until he should "put off this tabernacle" (2 Pet. 1: 14). Teach that not prayer in the neglect of work, but work in the spirit of prayer, is the true

idea of the Christian life. Then you may speak of the heavenly visitants, the two grand worthies of the Old Dispensation—the great lawgiver and the great reformer. Give reasons for the special fitness of these to take part in this transfiguration scene, from their lives, office, death of one and translation without death of the other. Dwell fully on the voice from the cloud, the witness to Christ from His Father, and press especially the duty it enjoined—"Hear Him"—a duty as incumbent upon us as upon the disciples; to hear Him, not merely as a teacher, but to obey, to be His disciples, to follow Him, to take His yoke, yea, His cross, and then will come the glory on the mount of God, with Christ and the glorified saints, not for a brief moment, but for the "rest"—the "Sabbath keeping" of the life beyond.

On the second topic, there is a question of one another, "what the rising from the dead should mean." We wonder at their ignorance and dulness, and yet are we not as slow to receive some spiritual truths, especially those truths most opposed to our own carnal ideas? There was a question of Christ, "Why say the scribes," etc? To this Jesus replies that so far as the scribes kept to the word they were right, but that that prophecy had been fulfilled; Elias had come. So, then, while we are looking for the fulfilment of prophecy, it may be already fulfilled. Teach elder scholars from this the responsibilities and solemnities of life. In the midst of the answer to the second occurs a third question; this time by Christ: "How is it written of the Son of man?" The predictions respecting the forerunner have been fulfilled; shall not those also respecting the Messiah, connecting with the thoughts of vers. 9-10? Show here how all the O. T. prophecies of Messiah point to a suffering, rejected, dying Christ, and how perfectly all were fulfilled in Jesus. Press the fact noted on ver. 4, that the subject on which Moses and Elias talked with Jesus was about this very thing—his death; and show that every scholar in your class has an interest in this that ought to be all-absorbing, for in the sufferings and death of Christ is the salvation of each and all.

Incidental Lessons.—That prayer and consecration will change men.

That the mount of prayer often becomes the mount of glory.

That the New and the Old Dispensations meet in Christ.

Moses and Elias on the mount witnesses of immortality.

That where Jesus is there is communion and glory.

How near to us is the invisible world: Luke 23: 43; Heb. 1: 14; 12: 1.

The glory of Christ on the mount an earnest of our own future glory.

That we shall know each other in the glorified state.

That retiring from the world is not the will of the Master.

"Jesus only" the central fact of our faith; all else comes and goes.

Main Lessons.—The work of Christ the object of saintly and angelic interest: Eph. 3: 9, 10; 1 Pet. 1: 10-12. At the birth, temptation, agony, resurrection, and ascension.

Jesus the Son of God; God attests it: Matt. 17: 5; Luke 3: 22; John 12: 28.

The duty to which this glorious manifestation points: "Hear Him," Matt 7: 24; John 6: 45; 14: 24.

If the glory on the mount was so great and joyful, how much more when His people shall see Him as He is, and be like Him?—1 Cor. 15: 49; 2 Cor. 5: 1-5; Phil. 1: 23; Heb. 12: 22-23; 1 John 3: 2.

PRIZE BIBLE QUESTIONS.

[For prizes and conditions see INDEPENDENT for January.]

PRIZE BIBLE QUESTIONS FOR MAY.

A very common New Testament designation of God's

people is used once in the Old Testament to signify angels. What is it?

At what trade did the Apostle Paul work, and in what city?

Quote the testimony which the servants of the Sanhedrim, sent to arrest Jesus, gave of His teachings.

LADIES' HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETIES.

The Ladies' Home Missionary Societies of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick render good service in the way of supplementing the funds outside of the regular contributions. The Treasurer of the Congregational Union of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick informs us that the amount received for the year 1880-81 was \$223.47, as follows:—Liverpool, \$30.51; Milton, \$32; St. John, \$30; Brooklyn, \$23.78; Economy, \$22; Yarmouth, \$20; Cornwallis, \$20; Beachmeadows, \$10.47; at Union meeting, 1880, \$8. Unfortunately the greater part of these amounts were not given in the last Year Book, the return having been made up before the meeting of the Union at Noel, when the larger portion of the contributions were handed in. These amounts were, however, included in last year's accounts.

AN AMERICAN'S IDEAL.

BY WILL M. CLEMENS.

A commonplace young girl;
A decidedly rare young girl;
Stay at home night,
Do what is right,
Help-her-old-mother young girl.

A hard-to-find young girl;
A reader-of-fact young girl;
An extra poetical,
Anti-æsthetical,
Care nothing-for-novels young girl.

A minus-her-bangs young girl;
A show-all-her-brains young girl;
With an unpowdered face,
One that don't lace,
A dress-for-her-health young girl.

An up-in-the-morning young girl;
A help-with-the-wash young girl;
One that can rub,
Not afraid of the tub,
A roll-up-her-sleeves young girl.

A quiet-and-modest young girl;
A sweet-and-pure young girl;
An upright, ambitious,
Lovely, delicious,
A pride-of-the-home young girl.

A remarkably-scarce young girl;
A very-much-wanted young girl;
A truly-American,
Too utter paragon,
The kind-that-I-like young girl.

—N. Y. Independent.

Children's Corner.

BOYS' RIGHTS.

I wonder now if anyone
 In this broad land has heard,
 In favour of down-trodden boys,
 One solitary word?
 We hear enough of "woman's rights,"
 And "rights of working-men,"
 Of "equal rights" and "nation's rights,"
 But pray just tell us when
 Boys' rights were ever spoken of?
 Why, we've become so used
 To being snubbed by every one,
 And slighted and abused;
 That when one is polite to us,
 We open wide our eyes,
 And stretch them in astonishment
 To nearly twice their size!

Boys seldom dare to ask their friends
 To venture in the house;
 It don't come natural at all
 To creep round like a mouse.
 And if we should forget ourselves,
 And make a little noise,
 Then ma or auntie sure would say,
 "Oh, my! those dreadful boys!"
 The girls bang on the piano
 In peace, but if the boys
 Attempt a tune with fife or drum,
 It's "Stop that horrid noise!"
 "That horrid noise!" just think of it!
 When sister never fails,
 To make a noise three times as bad
 With everlasting "scales."

Insulted thus, we lose no time
 In beating a retreat;
 So off we go to romp and tear,
 And scamper in the street.
 No wonder that so many boys
 Such wicked men become;
 'Twere better far to let them have
 Their games and plays at home.
 Perhaps that text the teacher quotes
 Sometimes—"Train up a child"—
 Means only train the little girls,
 And let the boys run wild.
 But patience, and the time shall come
 When we will all be men;
 And when it does, I rather think,
 Wrongs will be righted then.

CANA IN GALILEE.

This place, now called Kanah, when recently visited by a missionary, was found to contain some very interesting inquirers concerning the truth as it is in Jesus. The missionary held some meetings amongst them, which were the means of drawing out six of the recent converts, who asked for an opportunity to profess their new faith. Some time

ago, several boys from Kanah waited on him at Sidon, and explained that it took a great deal of time to come and return to their village every day, and in winter they might be kept away from the school by the severity of the storms. They then asked for a room in which to sleep, eat and study. A large room was given them upon condition that they would furnish it and provide themselves with food, and take charge of themselves. This they did, and though ten in number, they were no trouble, and received no help. Afterwards they asked for a grant of tracts and old religious papers, that they might distribute them in a neighbouring village. In one village these tracts produced a perfect commotion, and the only Protestant there was sent for at night to explain and prove statements.

PROGRESS OF SIN.

The trees of the forest held a solemn Parliament, wherein they consulted of the wrongs the axe had done them. Therefore they enacted, That no tree should hereafter lend the axe wood for a handle, on pain of being cut down. The axe travels up and down the forest, begs wood of the cedar, ash, oak, elm, even to the poplar. Not one would lend him a chip. At last he desired so much as would serve him to cut down the briars and bushes, alleging that these shrubs did suck away the juice of the ground, hinder the growth, and obscure the glory of the fair and goodly trees. Hereon they were content to give him so much; but when he had got the handle he cut down themselves too. These be the subtle reaches of sin. Give it but a little advantage, on the fair promise to remove thy troubles, and it will cut down thy soul also. Therefore resist beginnings. Trust it not in the least.

EARTHLY things must remind us of heavenly. We must translate the book of nature into the book of grace.

SPEAK SOFTLY.

Speak softly, gently ever !
 There is no wiser part ;
 For harsh words pierce like steel
 The yearning, loving heart.

As gems reflect in brightness
 Every fitting beam,
 Let words reflect in kindness
 Love's sunny, love-lit gleam.

Speak softly, gently ever :
 There is no better plan—
 For angry words can never
 Effect what kind ones can.

For, oh ! a soft word spoken
 May move the stubborn soul,
 That still would prove defiant
 Should words of thunder roll.

Speak softly, gently ever !
 Words breathing naught save love !
 And soon our blighted Eden
 Will bloom as realms above !

BAMBOOS.

There is no tree known on earth which subserves so many purposes as the bamboo. The Indian obtains from it a part of his food, many of his household utensils, and a wood at once lighter and capable of bearing greater strains than heavier timber of the same size. Besides, in expeditions in the tropics, under the rays of a vertical sun, bamboo trunks have more than once been used as barrels, in which a water, much purer than could be preserved in vessels of any other kind, is kept fresh for the crew. Upon the west coast of South America, and in the large islands of Asia, bamboos furnish all the materials for the construction of houses at once pleasant, substantial, and preferable to those of stone, which the frequently recurring earthquakes bring down upon the heads of the lodgers.

The softest of the bamboos is the *Sammot*. In the tracts where it grows in the greatest perfection it sometimes rises to the height of one hundred feet, with a stem only eighteen inches in diameter at the base. The wood itself is not more than an inch in thickness. The fact that the bamboo is hollow has made it eminently useful for a variety of purposes ;

it serves as a measure for liquids, and if fitted with a lid and bottom, trunks and barrels are made of it. Small boats even are made of the largest trunks by strengthening them with strips of other wood where needed.

In one day they attain the height of several feet, and with the microscope their development can be easily watched. But the most remarkable feature about the bamboo is their blossoming. With all this marvellous rapidity of growth they bloom only twice in a century, the flower appearing at the end of fifty years. Like other grasses, they die after having borne seed.

"BURN HIM."

A Greek priest in Bashan has lately been cruelly beaten by his own son and others, because he wished to profess himself a Protestant Christian. His own wife also suggested to the people that the best thing they could do was to burn him. He has been a diligent student of the Bible for more than twenty years. He was obliged to flee to the guardianship of the missionary. He was found to be a decided Christian, and well instructed. His delight now is to speak to others of the way of salvation. His son threatens to kill him if he returns home.

"HATRED stirreth up strifes : but love covereth all sins."—*Prov. x. 12.*

HE who lives only to benefit himself, confers on the world a benefit when he dies.

HERE is a story of a little girl, three years old, who was charged with breaking a flower from its stem. She said : " No, I didn't b'eak it." Still, the older person argued that she must have done it, for no one else had been in the room ; but she said : "'Deed, 'deed I didn't." Thinking to make her confess, the older said : " Now, Ada, I see a story in your eye." Her reply was, " Well, that's one I told the other day, for I didn't b'eak the f'ower." And it was found that she didn't.