

Practical Papers.

STAGNATION IN THE CHURCH.



HE apostle poetically calls the Church of Christ a building, borrowing no doubt the poetic license from the prophet who pointed to Christ as "the chief corner-stone." To continue the use of this figure in the consideration of the state of the Church, it may be said truthfully there is less cause for congratulation than humiliation in the progress this building has made in a period extending over nearly nineteen centuries.

Notwithstanding it stands upon a foundation divinely solid, foreshadowed by plans and specifications the most minute and faultless; but a tithe of its material is in shape to-day. Admitting the contingency there was in the finite capacity of the agencies chosen in its erection, it is equally true that every security was given that both wisdom and power from the Master-builder would be furnished. And when we know that not only was the inspiration of the presence of the Master-builder vouchsafed, but that the workmen themselves are professedly consecrated to work in harmony with his designs, is it not natural to expect that the walls should to-day be higher than they are?

We cannot suppose it is of necessity that but a portion of the habitable globe is blessed with Gospel light, or that a mere fraction of the Christendom of to-day should be all that a loving God designed should share at this period the blessing of salvation. If, therefore, this spiritual building is not intentionally delayed, may we not suppose it in agreement with so condescending a plan of redemption that at this period, or long ere this, the top stone might be laid on with rejoicing?

But to judge of the future by the past, how long must it be before that gracious consummation is effected? And certainly the history of the progress of this building from year to year bears little encouragement that the strides of advancement will be so rapid as to effect the completion in any startling or surprising manner. For if we take the annual census of that branch of the Church best known to us, there is such vacillation between increase and decrease in numerical strength, as to practically determine the Methodist wing of this building at a comparative standstill. Nor are we the more hopeful for the future, when the limited increase now and then cause of congratulation almost amounting to a satisfaction.

to accept such congratulation as a measure of the faith of the Church? And how natural the consequence that the progress will be in conformity with it! The handful rescued creates a rapture that drowns a sympathy for the millions left enchained. Or, to use again the apostolic figure, the inch gained in the wall expels the mortification that would follow the reflection that the growth should be measured by feet.

Taking into account that results are expected from the evangelism of the membership as well as the ministrations of a ministry, the Christian out of holy orders attracting by a magnetism, as hinted in Matt. v. 16, is it a cause of congratulation that in twelve months a force nearly 90,000 strong can only report an increase of a little over 3,000 to the communion to which they belong? Surely in so many months each consecrated workman might by some means have placed one stone in this building! Then would the increase be estimated by tens of thousands, and the mortification of reporting so small an increase would be saved the pen that constructs the Pastoral Address of the Church.

There must be some way of accounting for this tardy growth, and sufficient cause for holding inquest on the subject. For the growth is so wanting in proportion to the professed power employed, that it can hardly be called stunted; it amounts to a stagnation. And although it would be within the limits of such enquiry to gauge the share taken in this building by the individual Christian, and it would be easy to show that out of the pulpit but little comparatively is done to advance the Church, it is the purpose of this paper to deal especially with the department of the work that has been committed to the care of the pulpit of the Church.

I am free to say, however, that what often passes for failure in ministration is not worthy that charge. For apparent inaction is not always such. Progress may obtain without ocular demonstration in a spiritual work. That as a row of brick may be laid around an entire building, costing a day's work, without a perceptible difference in height, so may the ministry of a period accomplish a work no more evident to the ordinary spectator.

Altering the figure here, may it not be said that growth occurs imperceptibly in the seed sown? In husbandry, it is not necessary that the shoot should immediately follow the casting of the seed. I know there are some in the Church ready to express horror if the blade is not simultaneous with the seed-casting. But a turning aside the soil, if such are not too lazy, would save to such the trouble of complaint, and the Church a pain, as they discover that the root has begun to grow downward; and on close inspection it would occur to such critics that the root is as important as the blade, inasmuch as the safety of the blade depends upon the root.

In this connection, many in the ministry of every branch of the Church have been misrepresented, if not thoroughly ignored; because, with more aptness to teach than arouse, and dealing more with the intellect than the emotions, they have succeeded in rooting well the seed for a harvest to be reaped by others who, with the hoe or harrow of appeal, are better adapted to bring to the surface and to ripeness the moral effect of well-digested truth.

The harvester gets the credit; and the more if his sheaves are the stronger for the thorough grounding in doctrine the seed obtained 'neath the convincing logic of a thoughtful forerunner.

I am not counting without my host in this, as I can point out certain members of our own ministry who rarely enjoy the sight of conversion, but whose ministry is invariably followed by extensive ingatherings during the incumbency of their successors. And I believe that the sheaves expected by some will be borne by others in the day of harvest, to the surprise of many who are ready to denounce the ministry wherein but few accessions to the Church occur.

Yet after all this parenthetical reference, there is still reason for complaint over the meagre returns made from year to year, in the "*numbering up the people.*" And there is no doubt but the effect of a gospel ministry is painfully inferior to what the wants of a world and the evident designs of the Head of the Church demand.

Confining our treatment of this question to the Methodist Church, how reasonable the question, "Why so little success with a ministerial power which is supplemented by the valuable element of a lay ministry, and a variety of subordinate officers which open up channels of usefulness?" For there is nothing more sure than that the success of a ministry is dependent upon the provision made to intact the good effected by its effort; and in no Church is this more amply provided for than in the Church referred to, wherein by a local ministry the services are more common, and by the leaders the membership, in Mr. Guthrie's words, "*are held fast.*"

But I fancy I hear the reader say, "Is not the ministry itself somewhat to blame in this matter?" It may be so. And if so, there is no disposition in the writer to burke the question. Indeed, there is some reason to fear that to the pulpit belongs a measure of blame. It would be strange indeed if, among a ministry as large as in the Canadian Wesleyan Church, there was not a measure of defect. And it would be equally strange if the defect were perfectly concealed. And it is but the credit due to the faithful in this inquiry to be plain in dealing with those in whom correction is necessary. For instance, if the minister evinces by his influence the suspicion at least that there is a want of conformity between himself and his office, it does but defend the man whose influence declares him to be within his calling, if the pen or the tongue deals faithfully with the man suspected as out of place. And who, witnessing an incongruity in the ministerial office, is not liable to suspect either that the man has broken the trust confided in him by the Spirit that called him, or was never called at all by that Spirit? And if in the pulpit, without divine sanction, there is some blame at least at the door of the Church itself, inasmuch as Methodism has ample means for proving its ministry before it is entrusted with the functions of ordination.

But it may be said that, whether called or not to the holy office, there are some who seem at least to limit the aim of the pulpit to the mere intellectual idea of preaching—satisfied when a sermon carefully prepared is delivered to a delighted crowd powerless to criticise its rhetoric, logic, poetry, or theology.

I am reminded of the possibility of such limitation by the recollection of hearing a minister congratulating himself on having to preach occasionally in a suburban church in a city to which he had just been appointed, on the ground that he could try his sermons before the hungry few ere he committed his compositions to the criticism of the hundreds in the principal church. Of course there is in this but a little advance upon a mere ceremony in a ministry that can make of a pulpit responsibility so mechanical a thing.

Just fancy a man equipped for a war against the Russians stepping out of the ranks with no higher loyalty to his cause than to exhibit the perfection of his drill! Chuckling if his guards in sword exercise are faultless, or his aim at some spot in the mountains remarkable for precision; then returning to his queen satisfied if he had established a reputation for system and order, without even crippling an enemy or storming a rampart.

To my mind, the man whose aim is not to convert; whose appeal, however carefully prepared, is not directed at the fifth rib, and who merely stands to be seen or heard and not felt, is as far below his calling as the military fop I have described. And there ought to be some voice heard from some quarter, in addition to the one methinks rings through the conscience in unmistakable tones, exclaiming "GET OUT." But it may also be said that in company with the truest aim in the ministry to do good to the soul as well as the brain, the effort is made powerless by a despondency which enters the pulpit as well as the pew; and which has the effect there, as well as in the pew, of clipping the faith necessary to success. This cause of stagnation in the Church is more to be pitied than blamed, as all will admit who have suffered from a personal paralysis in religion from the very same cause. It is the very same type of moral biliousness or dyspepsia which saps the life out of the trembling sermon as that which leads to a dragging to the class or prayer-meeting in the case of individual profession. Around such the Church should rally, and by all means the arms of such should be held up till Israel prevails, and the success that results will fill the despondent with joy, and snap, and fire, and faith will soon accumulate in the sermons of such.

And it may be said also that the ministerial haste or laxity in the administration of the discipline of the Church, have either or both neutralized the moral weight of pulpit power and effect. And there is some truth in the statement. The weeds have not been as carefully pulled, and the ground has not, as the farmer says, been as faithfully cleaned, as would give promise of the desired harvest. Thorns have been *allowed* to choke the seed; and the field has become a vexation rather than a blessing.

These are *among* the causes of stagnation in the Church, and are mentioned first because it is the reasonable demand of honesty to own the faults that lurk among ourselves ere we deal with those that are as truly scattered among the pews of our churches. To these I may turn attention in a future article on this subject; this paper being already of sufficient length. But in the meantime, may we not pray that a quickening may come, and the battle rage more bravely that the world may the sooner be won to Christ?

NATURE AND GRACE.

Eph. ii. 1-10.



OUR object in selecting these words as a subject for consideration is, with the hope of gaining your attention to the most mysterious, yet the most important subject that can concern human beings. The truths they contain deeply and most solemnly affect both you and your family, as well as me and mine, both now and for ever. Your attention to them will not necessarily involve any loss,—either of property, or character, or reputation ;—will not make your pleasures less, or your trials more,—but will give weight, and wisdom, and blessing to all your movements. There is one feature of truth running through them with which you may have some, though painful experience ; being children of disobedience, we are necessarily under the displeasure of our Ruler and Judge. Under such circumstances we have no peace, being cut off from its source ; we are therefore children of wrath, having no hope, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment. The truths are revolutionary in their character and design ; they imply an entire reverse of action and object in life,—they will share in no compromise with either friend or foe,—they demand a full abandonment of the one, with an unreserved surrender to the other, before you can be permitted to sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus. “ If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature ; old things are passed away, and all things have become new.”

What a gloomy picture does the Apostle give of the unrenewed condition of man !—“ Dead,” dead to all serious and devout feeling—insensible to every gracious disposition and affection—inactive to all the pleasures and responsibilities of a godly life. But the Apostle enlarges. There are two features of conduct by which he is characterized—“ Dead in sins,” and “ walking according to the course of this world.” The engagements and pursuits of this life are not necessarily opposed to godliness ; they may, indeed, be consecrated by Christian principles, and thus may form part of our service to God. So also the innocent pleasures and comforts of life may be hallowed, and their sweetness increased, by being blended with holy affections, and by being directed to the glory of God. But when worldly pursuits and pleasures absorb our interest : and their claims yielded to at the cost and dishonor of true religion, then the deceitfulness of riches and the pleasures of this life, transfer the whole of life’s service and care to the money side, “ the course of this world.”

The Apostle mentions another feature of character, and dwells upon it with solemn interest—that they are under the *dominion of Satan*, and are instigated and impelled to a course of evil by some of those wicked spirits who acknowledge him as their leader and head, “ according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.” What

a momentous consideration, over which the men of the world might profitably ponder! Those fretful cares and anxieties about business are kept up by an arrangement of circumstances and events—so adjusted and adapted to the peculiar temperament of the individual, by the God of the world, as leaves the unhappy creature neither time nor disposition for aught else. This language of the Apostle may be a little difficult to understand; and in our present state of limited vision will never be able fully to comprehend. Nevertheless, being a subject of revelation and of history, as well as daily observation, we must admit the fact and prevalency of Satanic agency: He is termed the Ruler of the darkness of this world—(chap. vi. 12), the Prince of the power of the air—(chap. ii. 12.) The earth is the theatre of a spiritual conflict, in which fallen angels take an important part,—spirits subtle, malignant, powerful; and these are marshalled under one great presiding, governing intelligence. Call to mind his power to control the elements of fire and wind which destroyed the property of Job! See the cunning and ability with which he attacked and carried on the contest with Christ in the wilderness! See the poor demoniac, dwelling among the tombs, exceeding fierce, bound with fetters and chains, and always night and day in the mountains and in the tombs, crying and cutting himself with stones, Mark v. 3-5. These considerations give us some idea of the unspeakable solemnity of the contest going on, and in which the Church of God is engaged in contending with the various forms of error, and idolatry, and vice, that darken and pollute the world. Looking at this earth in the light which Holy Scripture sheds on its moral state, we cannot doubt that the numerous forms of idolatry which enslave millions of our race, that the whole world lieth like an insensible, helpless baby, in the arms of the wicked one, 1 John v. 19. The fearful errors which have crept into our holy Christianity, and greatly weakened its power for good, and the manifold influences which tend to delude men to their ruin, all involve the agency of the powers of evil. These are incessantly active: they seek access to individual man, to suggest thoughts of evil, and to make outward circumstances the occasion of sin. If we are regardless of the authority of God—neglect the means he has provided, refuse the help which the church gratuitously offers, and turn away from the path of duty—we become an easy prey to their seductions, to be led captive by the devil at his will.

“Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.” How true to life is the description here given of the children of disobedience. They follow their own inclinations,—they gratify their own desires. They may or may not rush into the grosser sins and habits of life; but they are swayed by “the lusts of the flesh and of the mind.” These tendencies are tenfold. There is a craving for the pleasures of sense: and some, alas! abandon themselves to the impulses of their animal nature. Next, the desires of the mind, or of “the thoughts.” The carnal, or unrenewed mind is enmity against God,—refuses to submit to His authority, hostile to His rule and service, while it indulges in disorderly feelings towards his fellow-men. With such a descrip-

tion of fallen humanity as here given by the inspired Apostle, should we not be justified in saying, that sinful, unredeemed man is the foulest, blackest spot in the universe of God? If he was alone, he would be scorned and dreaded, and no one would come nigh his dwelling; but, because they are many, people take refuge in numbers, in multitudes, "for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat."

The most promising and encouraging contemplation on what the Apostle can dwell is, that this disorderly and unhappy state of things is no more,—that new principles and habits of life and character are brought into prominent action,—that he is *raised* from this condition to one of peace, and safety, and dignity in Christ. He lingers on this thought, and accumulates expressions to give expansion and emphasis to its greatness and grandeur. He endeavors to imprint on their minds the great obligation under which they are placed to the great Mover and Deliverer—"God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved), and raised us up together (with Him) and made us sit together (with Him) in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Our reverent thought falters as we attempt to grasp the full import of these words. They are intended (no doubt) to rivet our attention on the fact, that so intimate is the union between Christ and His people, so closely are their interests and destiny linked with His, that in the very facts of His resurrection and exaltation, God has accomplished the resurrection and exaltation of all who are in Him.

The Apostle is very particular in the description of their salvation,—that it is all of *grace*,—that is not bestowed as the reward of human merit, but brought about by the abounding kindness and love of God, upon those who were utterly unworthy of it,—that it is perfectly gratuitous and free. He goes on to show that our faith also is "not of ourselves," but is "the gift of God." It is not a principle originated by ourselves,—it is not a mere intellectual exercise, a mere assent to truth upon sufficient evidence; but involves an operation of God upon our souls, calling it into existence and sustaining its exercise; yet in no way superseding our voluntary agency. Neither is it of works, lest any man should boast. One of the most pernicious and insinuating tendencies of our depraved nature is, to regard with fond complacency what we ourselves do, losing sight of the fact that all we have is the gift of God. Now, the very nature and object of the grace of God in accomplishing our salvation is, to strike at the root of this baneful tendency. If our salvation were of works, then we should have something whereof to glory, and the grace of God would be of none effect; but the fact, that our salvation is altogether of grace, that we receive it by trusting in the sacrificial death and righteousness of another, and that that trust is formed within us by a Divine power, shows us that we must utterly renounce all glorifying in ourselves, and give the glory to God alone.

While the Apostle is very careful to disclaim good works as being meritorious, he does not intend it to be understood that a course of holy obedience to the Divine precepts was a matter of indifference, or did not form a part of

the Christian economy. The tenth verse of this chapter is very emphatic on this,—“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *good works*, which God had before ordained that we should walk in them.” This language is most comprehensive and forcible. The Apostle appears never to be tired of dwelling on the union of believers with Christ, and the benefits of such union as manifested in their daily work. He represents it as forming a part of God’s original purpose in the creation of man. That for this purpose he created him in His own image—endowed him with faculties equal with and suitable to his high vocation—breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and set him over the works of his hand. The essential principle of holiness were dear to Him before any creature rose into being; and, when His power had called into existence the dependent universe, with its various orders of intelligent beings, it was His will that these principles should develop themselves in their several relations, which they should sustain to Himself and to each other. The course of duty was thus “prepared beforehand” of God, and when in the fulness of His eternal purpose in Christ He effects a new creation in the believing mind; that great change is to be evinced in a life of practical obedience to His will. Facts and representations of personal godliness, as given by our Lord and His Apostles, are in direct harmony with the above statements. The religious experience of men of modern times bear similar features of a kindred character with those of the past. Many witnesses might be selected—one we will give—and one whose unaffected simplicity and long and useful life is deserving our profound respect and confidence. The late rev. and venerable Thomas Jackson, while combating a clerical dignitary, whose notions of conversion were very sceptical, says, in reference to himself and his own conversion:—“We are acquainted with an old man, who was once a careless youth, but was at length recognized in a Wesleyan prayer-meeting as a weeping penitent. Some ‘members of the church,’ observing his distress, encouraged him to put his trust in Christ as his Saviour for present pardon and acceptance with God. They also offered prayers on his behalf; and, while thus waiting upon the Lord, he found rest to his soul. From that hour he was a ‘new creature.’ The whole bent of his nature was changed; he forsook his ungodly companions, connected himself with the church, became a diligent student of the Bible, and an attendant upon all the means of grace. He was, ere long, called to enter upon the Evangelical Ministry, in which he has labored for more than sixty years, not indeed with all the zeal and fidelity with which he ought to have labored, but he has not wickedly departed from his God. Bending now under the weight of more than fourscore years, he is waiting in resignation and joyous hope for the coming of His Lord.” Since then he has been called home to rest from his labors, and share the triumphs of his God.

Need any more be said on this subject to impress you with the great importance of a religious life? You may have all the good things we have said, with much more that might be said, put into your creed, and that creed a subject of study and defence; but it will be of no real service to you, unless your heart is made in unison with it by the Spirit of God. Your flattering promises

about an improvement by and by, at the same time undecided, and the habits of careless indifference growing with your growth and strengthening with your increasing years, is all in vain. The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. In the name of God, then, strike for your liberty; be no longer a servant of sin, a stranger to piety, with a forboding conscience about the past, and a poor hope in reference to the future. With delays, difficulties accumulate, favorable opportunities become less frequent, while the full force of Gospel ordinances, now in operation, will gradually lose their effect upon you, and your day of probation fast ebbing out. "To-day, then, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." MINIMUS.

TO SEEKERS OF FULL SALVATION.

BY REV. DANIEL STEELE, D.D.



HE first word of advice to you is to gain a clear intellectual view of your spiritual need, and of your wealth of privilege in Christ Jesus, whom you have already claimed as your pardoning Saviour. Understand that he came not only that you might have spiritual life, but that you might have it more abundantly. When you sought forgiveness you looked away to Calvary, and saw by faith Jesus crucified; now that you are seeking the fullness of the Spirit, lift your eyes above the summit of Calvary, even to Jesus glorified on the mediatorial throne. The glorification of the Son of God opens a new dispensation in the unfolding of the Gospel. Previous to that great event in the heavenly world, Jesus had power on earth to forgive sins, but since he has mounted to his Father's throne, and by his hand has been crowned with the royal diadem, it has pleased him to give proof of his continued interest in all believers by sending down the fullness of the Holy Ghost. To this Jesus distinctly referred when he stood among the jubilant priests sounding their trumpets in the last great day of the feast of tabernacles, and made this wonderful promise, "He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his inmost self shall flow rivers"—not brooklets vanishing in the drought—"of living water." That Jesus was speaking of some future dispensation of blessings to believers, St. John, guided by divine inspiration, distinctly declares. "But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified." In this event the Gospel dispensation culminated. John the Baptist, when Jesus came to be baptized, saw this privilege of believers towering above all other blessings, an event in the future history of the Son of man eclipsing all other events, the end and aim of his incarnation, atoning death, glorious resurrection, and triumphant ascension, that he might mend the severed link between God and man, by the fusing, unifying power of the Holy Spirit. "After me comes one who shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." The Comforter came on the day of Pentecost,—came to stay; but his work is not an indefinite and general operation, but an individual transformation.

2. Though you live in the dispensation of the Spirit, the benefits of his presence are to be appropriated to you by faith. You say that you have

always been told to believe, and that you find it difficult. I will not blame you. Sometimes faith preached to young Christians, with no exemplification or simplifying of the act, is as inappropriate as to set a bushel of wheat before a half-starved suckling babe with the invitation to eat. You cannot believe without an object of faith. He stands forth before you in the Gospels, Jesus the Son of God. In this sense faith is the gift of God. You cannot believe without grounds, or evidences. They are found in the Gospels, in the miracles, and sinless character of Jesus Christ, and in the effects of his Gospel in human hearts and lives, and in its beneficent influence on the nations which have received its blessed light. The evidences of Christianity are the gift of God to you. But to receive their convincing effect you must study them constantly with a candid mind, willing to follow wherever the truth leads. If you would have faith in Christ, become familiar with His character and His teachings. It may be that we have four Gospels in order that the Son of God, in the perfection of his manhood, and the splendour of his Godhead, may pass four times before your eyes. As he who would be a perfect orator or poet is exhorted by Horace "to handle the Grecian models with a daily and a nightly hand," so must the believer, who aspires to be a perfect Christian, sit before the great Exemplar by day and by night. An enduring faith is largely grounded in the intellectual grasp of the truth. There is a sense in which we must know in order to believe. A man's character must be favourably known to the banker, before he will entrust him with his money. The more we know of Jesus, by the study of his fourfold biography, the deeper and broader the foundation for our faith in His promises. It also greatly assists our faith to know what marvellous effects have followed it in the history of the Church, especially in the opening chapter,—the Acts of the Apostles. Trace again and again the triumphant march of our holy faith from Jerusalem, conquering the inveterate prejudices of Jew and Gentile, as narrated by St. Luke in the Acts. You will find that faith is contagious. Association with some capacious soul who embraces the amplitude of the promises and holds fast to them with an unrelaxing grasp helps the feeble sinews of spiritual infancy to grow strong. St. Paul is such a soul. He is a spiritual giant. He is accessible to you all. His enthusiastic ardour, his invincible faith, which neither stripes nor prisons, plotting Jews nor riotous Gentiles could shake, will be a tonic to your spiritual weakness. Lock arms with him, and walk through his epistles till you catch his gait and measure up to his Titanic strides, as he boldly approaches the throne of grace in the name of the everliving High Priest. "What part of the Bible do you read the most?" said a Scotch minister to an o'd woman of remarkable faith in God. "The glorious epistles," was the quick reply. On this strong meat all the giants of the Church have fed. You will find St. Paul's later epistles especially adapted to enlarge your view of your privilege under the dispensation of the Spirit. It is very evident that the great apostle grew in grace mightily between the day when the scales fell from his eyes in Damascus and the day when he penned the epistle to the Ephesians. But do not rest satisfied with an intimate acquaintance with the Scriptures.

3. While making this acquaintance with the grounds of faith, endeavour to appropriate to yourself every promise of spiritual grace. St. Paul made the promises and atoning blood of Christ his own private property. Here was the secret of his Herculean strength of faith. "The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of (in) the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." He did not exclude others, but he was sure to include himself, and to insist not on a fraction of Christ, but a whole Christ to be as completely appropriated to himself as if he were the solitary son of Adam for whom atonement had been made. Rutherford, whose name is precious to all

devout Scotchmen as ointment poured out, and whose letters are indeed a garden of spices for the walks of believers, had evidently learned this secret of appropriating faith. He often, with special earnestness, besought the Father to distribute "the great Loaf, Christ," to himself and to his flock. Let me advise you to practise writing out the promises of the Lord Jesus, especially the promise of the abiding Comforter, which Jesus styles *the* promise of the Father, and to insert your own name in the place of the *whosoever*, or *onyman*, or other general term. This treatment of the promises seems to be the best antidote for that general and indefinite faith which accredits them as true for the mass, but not for the individual. In this way most of the promises are thrown away by believers, as the threatenings are thrown away by unbelievers. But when we write our own name in them, and bring them to the throne of grace, we are impressed as never before with the thought that the promise must be fulfilled to me personally or it is a failure. You will be astonished to discover how much your spiritual aspirations will be quickened, and your suit at the mercy-seat intensified, by so simple a device as this. Thus I have given you advice concerning faith such as the great commentator Bengel gives for searching the Scriptures.

"Apply thyself wholly to the text ;
Apply the subject wholly to thyself."

After you have fixed your faith on some promise of full salvation you are to believe that the fullness is for you. You must believe that God is able to give it to you, and that he is willing to fulfil His word now, for to-day is the day of salvation. You must go one step farther, and believe that he doth it. But you say, "I don't realize any change." Do you not see that you are looking for some token that God is true. You must trust his naked word. The nobleman was told by Jesus, "Go thy way, thy son liveth." He did not ask for some sign that the promise was true; but he believed the word of Christ, and acted on that faith. To wait till you feel the change before you believe is to walk by feeling and not by faith. It is to put the consequent before the antecedent, the effect before the cause. You are not commanded to feel, but to trust. To feel the change is to know it. To wait for knowledge is to walk by sight. In an important sense knowledge originates in faith. We cannot know that we are the sons of God till we have trusted the promises up to the moment when the spirit of adoption cries in our hearts, "Abba, Father." After that hour our sonship is a matter of knowledge. If I have not attained perfect love, the promise of the abiding Comforter, who shall be the Sanctifier, and glorify Christ to my consciousness as mine, wholly mine, is a subject of faith. It is our duty to insist on the truth of Christ, and to say that he does now keep His word. When it pleases Him to reveal Christ to you as your complete Saviour; your faith on this point will be lost in sight, and your faith will reach up and claim some higher blessing, yet unattained. On this Jacob's ladder you will climb up to heaven. This faith which insists that God doeth the work now, must proceed upon the assumption that you cannot make yourself better by waiting. If perfect love is by faith, it must be now, just as I am. These three must always go together—faith, now, and just as I am. There are also three other things which constitute the creed of the legalist, works, some future time, when I have myself better.

But you ask the question, Is every believer prepared to believe for entire sanctification and the fullness of God? No. If he has no earnest, insatiable desire for it he cannot believe. Nor can he till he has made an entire surrender of himself deliberately, and forever, to Christ. He must be willing that he should subvert all his life plans, and enter into all his present being and future history. In other words, entire consecration is as necessary to

sanctifying, as repentance is to justifying faith. While you are consecrating yourself, various tests will be presented to your mind. Some of these will be suggested by the Holy Spirit. You must abide them. Others may be suggested by Satan to defeat your purpose. He may thrust some strange, or unreasonable and absurd duty forward as a test. How am I to treat these suggestions of the adversary when unable to discriminate them from the suggestions of the Holy Ghost? You should declare your willingness to do all the will of God as it shall be made manifest by the word, the Spirit, providence, and reason conspiring. The suggestions of Satan will disappear when our willingness to obey God fully appears. The suggested tests of the Holy Spirit will continue to press themselves upon our attention, and demand our compliance after God has given us conscious acceptance. Rev. A. B. Earle was deeply impressed, when seeking the witness of adoption, that he ought to go on a mission to Africa. He struggled against it for some time, and at last said, "I will do God's will in Africa, or in any other country on earth." Since that moment the call to Africa has ceased. There was no providential opening, but a wide field for evangelism in America, for which thousands of redeemed souls will thank God through eternity. It is evident that Satan was pressing this deadly Mission upon him to drive him from his purpose of full consecration. It is always safe to say in such cases, "O Lord, I will do Thy will as interpreted by Thy word and Thy providence." We have now pointed out a stone against which thousands have stumbled in their approach to the blessings of the fullness of the Spirit, and we have endeavored to show you how you may avoid it.

4. In urging your suit, rest wholly on the name of your indorser, Jesus Christ. In his address, John, chap. xiv-xvii., in which the pearl of perfect love is again and again promised in the coming of the abiding Comforter, Jesus inserts in every promise the condition, "in My name." This means that we are to identify our plea with the glory of Christ. We cannot fail when we pray for the same blessing for which he intercedes in our behalf. We are sure that selfishness does not underlie our petition, when our aim is the glory of Christ only. When we thus use the name of our High Priest, we clothe ourselves with his merit, we arm ourselves with His authority. The name of Jesus is like the signet ring of an absent monarch, purposely left behind to authenticate the acts of his ministers. It transfers His power to them. So has Jesus transferred to our hands the key that unlocks the treasury of heaven, and secures the outpouring of the anointing that teacheth and abideth, "The greatest gift that men can wish or Heaven can send."

5. Do not fail, when urging your plea, to remember that you have rights with God the Father in Jesus' name. You could not claim His mediatorial work and merit. But since this work has been done, you may now stand on the high platform of rights with God, and *claim* in Jesus' name all that he has purchased for you. He has invested you not only with a *right* to the tree of life, but to all that prepares you to pluck and eat its fruit. Again, "if any man confess his sins, He is faithful and *just* to forgive his sins, and to cleanse him from all unrighteousness." The term *just* is a jurial term, implying rights on the part of the believer and obligation on the part of God, the obligation not only of veracity expressed by the word faithful, but also the obligation of justice. He will not wrong us by withholding the greatest blessing purchased by His Son, and sacredly kept by the Father till the hour we come in that influential name and claim our heritage.

"Bold I approach the eternal throne,
And claim the crown through Christ my own."

6. Faint not. Jesus in His parables of the unjust judge and of the man

awakened by his friend at midnight, and in His interview with the Syrophenician woman, emphasizes intensity of spirit, importunity and perseverance in prayer. Especially is the unspeakable gift of the fullness of God to be obtained by persistent and prevailing prayer. Take with you into your closet Charles Wesley's wonderful portrayal of a struggling and victorious soul, "Wrestling Jacob," and make its intense expressions the vehicle of your earnestness, its bold demands, its unshaken purpose, its high resolve, the spirit of your plea, and you must sooner or later prevail. God yields to a thoroughly determined soul. The violent take the kingdom of heaven by force. You will find that this earnestness cannot be aroused except upon the plea which says, "Now, Lord, just as I am, fill me with Thy perfect love." If you drop the "now," and say at some time, you will find the sinews of your effort paralyzed, and your vehement desire cooled down to indifference.

7. Be patient. "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry." The Psalmist proved the truth of the adage, that the patient waiter is no loser. "For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise," *i.e.*, the thing promised. From lack of "the patience of hope," thousands have failed to grasp the prize of "Love divine, all love excelling," made perfect in their hearts, as a distinct and glorious work of the Sanctifier. You cannot fail if you persevere. The struggle may be only an hour; it may a month or a year. Some, after wandering as long as the children of Israel, in

"Sorrows and sins, and doubts and fears,
A howling wilderness,"

have emerged at last into this land of promise. Such invariably see that they might long, long before have had their portions assigned to them on the mountain of God, by their great Joshua, if they had obediently trusted him.

You will meet with the advice to cease all effort, and to subdue into quietude and stillness, to do nothing yourself, but let Christ do all for you. It is true that you can do nothing meritorious to improve your condition. It is also true that you must work the work of God, *i.e.*, which he requires. "And this is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." This may require high and strenuous effort to keep yourself on the Divine altar, to keep down doubt, and to hold unwaveringly to the word of God. The kind of stillness which Wesley recommended, you will be safe in practising,—

"Restless, resigned, for God I wait,
For God my vehement soul stands still."

The faith that brings us into the "valley of blessing so sweet" comes out of a furnace of desire, glowing with sevenfold ardor. It is not in harmony with the nature of the human sensibilities that this intensity of desire should be awakened and sustained in a state of passivity. Endeavor intensifies desire.

I cannot leave this subject without pointing out another rock over which many stumble in seeking both justification and perfect love. I refer to what for lack of a better name I call *tentative faith*, believing just by way of experiment. There is unbelief at the bottom of any such acts of the mind. Christ don't receive people who surrender to him just by way of trial, to see what blessings he will bestow, what rapturous joys he will inspire. There is no complete surrender possible, with this mental reservation, the purpose to take back your consecration if the results are not satisfactory. As true marriage must consist in a union of hearts for life, in order to the enjoyment of the highest bliss of that sacred institution, so must the marriage of the

soul to Christ be an everlasting union, the farthest possible remove from the caprices and criminally reserved rights of free love, coquetting with Christ to-day and the world to-morrow. Ye who fully purpose an eternal wedlock with Christ for better or for worse, approach the glorious Bridegroom in the utmost confidence that He will array you in a robe of clean linen, and present you unto Himself as his faultless bride, with exceeding joy,—joy in his own bosom, joy thrilling your spirit, and gladdening all the angels who witness the nuptials.—*Advocate of Holiness.*

A FREE SALVATION.



HAT encouragement there is to come for pardon to a throne of grace! Whatever thy state may be, thou need'st not hold off. Though thy sins be as scarlet, if thou come to Christ, they shall be made "white as wool." The greatest of sinners are invited. Can any sin be so great as to overtop the value of Christ's blood? Oh! there is not so much vileness and wretchedness in the sinful heart of man, as there is grace and goodness and virtue in Christ. There is no disease so bad that He cannot cure. Let me be as bad as I can be, there is no reason out of the Word of God why I should not come to Christ for salvation. He puts none back. His proclamation is—"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy wine and milk, without money and without price." "Whosoever will, let him come." What wouldst thou have more? The invitation cannot be plainer. If then thou art not saved, it is plain thou hast no wish for salvation; for if thou hast a will, thou hast a warrant.

Say not, "I would come, if I had so much humiliation and so much faith," for that were to make a bargain with Christ. If God were to say, "You must love Me, and I will pardon you," that were an exchange, not a free gift. Away with such a thought! Whosoever will, let him come. Christ keeps open house. Whosoever comes to Him, He will not shut out. If thou hast a heart to come to Him, He has a willing heart to receive thee. As it was with the prodigal son, his father does not wait till he comes to him, but he runs to meet him. So God is swift to have mercy upon us, though we come slowly on towards Him. However great the bulk and burden of thy sins, thou need'st not be discouraged. All ye that are heavy-laden, and feel the burden of sins, are invited by Christ. Let not Satan then, cheat you out of the comfort of this word. If Christ would make thy sins as the latch to open the door, and let Himself in, take care that thou dost not make them a bolt to shut Him out. Let thy wound be ever so great, thou hast a warrant to come to be cured. When blind Bartimeus heard the word, "Lo! Jesus calleth thee," he flung aside his garments, and came to Him. So let nothing keep thee back. Haste then to this city of refuge, and thou shalt be safe.

But God doth not only give thee leave to come; He commands thee to come. "And this is the commandment, that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ." If a man should say, "May I love my neighbour? would you not think him a fool? He is commanded to do so. So if a soul say to me, "May I trust in Jesus?" I reply, Thou art commanded to do so. The same commandment that bids thee love thy brother

bids thee believe in Him; and more, it is said, "He that believeth not shall be damned."

As the greatest gift doth not enrich a man unless he accept it and receives it, so God's gift of His Son will be no benefit to us if we will not receive Him. God's goodness will but turn to our greater condemnation. If we refuse Christ, and will not be saved, then wrath must abide on us for ever.

But how are we to receive Him? By faith—by simple trust in Him. Salvation is a free gift to sinners who trust in Jesus. There is no condition for receiving salvation but an empty hand to receive Christ. But, to be saved, Christ must be ours. If a man would give something to a beggar, the beggar must reach out his hand to receive it.

Faith is the empty hand that fills itself with Christ. If a man were drowning, and a cable were cast to him, and he lay hold of it, he would be drawn safe to shore. But if he lay hold of the cable, he must let go all other holds. So a man must let go all other holds, and lay fast hold of Jesus Christ: otherwise he cannot be saved.—*Usher*.

WITNESS-BEARING.

BY REV. J. BRASH.



One blames, or attempts to discourage a new-born child of God, when, with a grateful heart, he exclaims, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul." Why then should a believer, who has found in Christ a full salvation, be blamed when, in the fulness of his joy, he proclaims the fact to his brethren. If he were telling of something that he had done for himself, there would be good reason why he should be exhorted to hold his peace; but he, just as much as the other, is speaking of a blessing received. All that he himself has done has been to fulfil God's conditions of blessing—conditions which in their nature make self-glorification impossible.

And not only is there no reason why such a one should be silent: there is, as it seems to us, the strongest possible reason why he should speak of God's goodness.

Christian charity requires him to do it. If a man, who has suffered long from painful and wasting physical disease, finds at last a remedy, can he, when he meets others similarly afflicted, keep silence? A natural impulse constrains him to relate to them his own experience, and to tell them how they too may be cured. And when one who, after weary months or years of conflict with inbred sin, has obtained deliverance, hears his brethren in the Church complain of their barrenness, their want of rest, and lack of power, how can he help saying to them, "I have felt it all, and will tell you how I found rest?" The spirit that would restrain him from doing this is not the Spirit of God. Silence would be inconsistent with Christian love, and would quench the holy fire that has been kindled in his soul.

And we have almost daily proof that these relations of personal experience are eminently stimulating and helpful. It is scarcely too much to say that greater numbers have been led into the rest of perfect love through

reading or hearing the testimonies of those who had themselves found this rest, than by all the treatises that have been written on the subject. When a Christian merchant met an eminent preacher a few months ago, and said to him, "Have you had, during the past week, absence of care, unbroken peace, and fulness of joy?" and then went on to tell him that for about six years this had been his almost constant experience, the soul of the preacher was stirred within him as it had never been before, and from that hour he could not rest until he had obtained the same grace. If Mary Fletcher, Hester Ann Rogers, Mary Cryer, William Carosso, and a host of others that might be named, had hidden God's righteousness within their hearts in the way that some recommend, their biographies would have lacked that which is now their greatest charm, and would be scarcely read—the names of some of them would by this time have been forgotten, and the Church would have lost a rich heritage of blessing.

If it be as we have said, it is no wonder to learn that so many of the fully saved have found confession to be a necessary condition of walking in the light. When John Anderson was on the point of receiving a clean heart, it was suggested to him, "You will not confess it." "This," says Mr. Anderson, "was too much. Satan defeated his impious design. I saw his cloven foot, heard his lying voice; and in that moment my soul opened by faith, and the plenitude of God entered in and took possession of my heart." William Bramwell, who knew more than most men, both by observation and experience, about this blessing, says:—"I think such a blessing cannot be retained without professing it at every fit opportunity; for thus we glorify God, and with the mouth make confession unto salvation." The testimony of Fletcher is so much to the purpose, that we make no apology for giving it almost entire:—

"I received this blessing four or five times before; but I lost it by not observing the order of God, who has told us,—'With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.' But the enemy offered his bait under various colours, to keep me from a public declaration of what my Lord had wrought.

"When I first received this grace, Satan bid me wait awhile, until I saw more of the fruits. I resolved to do so; but I soon began to doubt of the witness which before I had felt in my heart, and was in a little time sensible I had lost both.

"A second time, after receiving this salvation (with shame I confess it), I was kept from being a witness for my Lord by the suggestion, 'Thou art a public character, the eyes of all are upon thee; and if, as before, by any means thou lose the blessing, it will be a dishonour to heart-holiness,' &c. I held my peace, and again forfeited the gift of God.

"At another time I was prevailed upon to hide it by reasoning,—How few even of the children of God will receive this testimony, many of them supposing every transgression of the Adamic law is sin; and therefore, if I profess myself to be free from sin, all these will give my profession the lie, because I am not free in their sense—I am not free from ignorance, mistakes, and various infirmities. I will therefore enjoy what God hath wrought in me, but I will not say I am perfect in love. Alas, I soon found again, 'He that hideth his Lord's talent, and improveth it not, from that unprofitable servant shall be taken away even what he hath.'

"Now, my brethren, you see my folly—I have confessed it in your presence; now I resolve before you all to confess my Master. I will confess Him to all the world, and I will declare unto you, in the presence of the Holy Trinity, I am now 'dead indeed unto sin.'"

There is no reason to believe that Mr. Fletcher ever lost the blessing after this time.

The practice we are recommending is liable to abuse. There are some who appear to think that confession is the only duty they have to perform in order to retain the blessing, and they continue to tell the old story of their deliverance from sin long after it has ceased to be a present reality. Others deceive themselves, and mistake a powerful emotion for sanctifying grace; while a few—very few, we believe—seek, like the Pharisees, a reputation for superior sanctity. But all these evils combined are not a sufficient reason why one who, through faith in Christ, has obtained holiness of heart, should deprive his brethren of a blessing by concealing from them “how great things the Lord hath done for him.”—*King's Highway*.

DANGERS.

BY R. PEARSALL SMITH.



It may seem strange to speak of the dangers of a walk in Christ, for it is essentially a walk of safety, and indeed the *only* place of safety. Christ is our fortress, in which we are beyond the range of the enemy's shafts. The danger, however, is not in a position “in Christ,” but in the liability to be drawn *out of* our “rock,” our “fortress,” by sudden temptation, or by lying disguises—from Satan's transformation into an angel of light, down to the various forms of “the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.” The devil, with his superhuman intellect, and six thousand years of experience in deceiving man, is a fearful adversary: the world presents not only gross temptation, but many fair shows of religiousness; and the flesh, or “body of sin,” though “destroyed” and “dead” may, by want of continued refuge in resurrection-life, “revive” in all its activity. And should we leave our strong tower, none more liable to outward trespass than those who have abandoned even the failing reeds of self-effort and vows, which sometimes restrain the external manifestation of an inward separation from Christ. The world, the flesh, and the devil are all against us. In a scene where nearly all distrust God, the sight of a being in utter self-helplessness, with such enemies, and yet, through God, triumphing over all, is a spectacle for heavenly hosts, and becomes a special mark for the darts of Satan.

Even in the vigorous youth of the early churches, founded under the guidance of the Apostles themselves, the leaven of corruption began to work. The Romans had to be cautioned not to judge their brethren, and set them at naught. The Corinthians had failed to purge out moral sin from their midst; the Galatians, having begun in the spirit, were seeking to be made perfect by the flesh. To the Philippians, the Apostle speaks of those who were the enemies of the cross of Christ, minding earthly things; and the Colossians seem to have had the leaven of a return to the rudiments of the world among them.

A special admonition seems, however, to have been given to the Ephesian church, which, more than any other, appears to have been living in resurrection-power. “Put on *the whole* armor of God,” urges the Apostle, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against . . . wicked spirits (see margin) in heavenly places.” The contest now is not so much through the appetites, in the wilderness scene, as on the other side of Jordan for the possession of the heavenly places of rest.

Now, indeed, the whole armor of God is needed. The omission of a single piece is dangerous. The argument is that because the contest is transferred to advance ground, *therefore* we require for victory all that God has given us. Yet we were not so safe when, with only wilderness preparations, we met the Amalek enemies, as now, when we have experienced that the whole armor of God is, indeed, ours, we have to encounter the Philistine in his more appalling manifestations.

Conscious that God's truth, through the Word, is by faith girt about our loins; that not only an imputed but a consequently imparted righteousness through grace gives us the "answer of a good conscience," "void of offence;" that we have our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel that brings God's peace into our souls; knowing the shield of faith *not only ought to, but actually does* turn the fiery darts of that wicked one; with realized present salvation for a helmet; and wielding a sword, the victorious power of which we have proved—we now find ourselves praying always in the Spirit; and, because we are so fully armed, watching with all perseverance. Here is, indeed, danger; but here is victory too. I have passed ten days at a time in a conflict with Satan, so actual as to remind me of Luther's vivid description of his contest in the castle—a conflict not of any temptations through the senses, but for retaining actual possession of my heavenly possession beyond Jordan, in resurrection-life and victory. No one who has been through such conflicts will speak lightly of them, nor of the danger, when they are over, of resting in the memory of victory, instead of in Christ alone. Continual practice with the poor, weak human heart, since the days of Adam, has not been in vain in teaching Satan *the suited temptation* to each soul. The danger is real and actual, though the scene may be removed far off from the old scenes of wilderness defeat, but no less real and actual is the victory of faith.

The duty of confessing Christ in all things which He bestows upon us, seems to be essentially connected with retaining His blessings, whether of the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins, or of that inward cleansing from sin, which is essentially included in the term "salvation." The special and marked blessing of God is on the confession; but yet like other blessings which lie hard by concealed dangers, the wily enemy of our souls would turn, were it possible, the confession of what we find Christ made unto us (1 Cor. i. 30) into a profession of what we *in ourselves* are. As in a moment the righteousness of the saint may be turned to filthy rags, and even pollution itself.

We know how instantly a soul is turned to darkness and doubt, which for one moment lets in the devil's suggestion that forgiveness of sins is partly of works, and the remainder of faith; even though, Simon Stylites-like, there be the most abject confession of unworthiness along with the claim of merit for unexampled, self-inflicted penance. "Salvation is of the Lord," wholly and exclusively of the Lord; nor will he in any point share its glory with any human being. As His enemies hated Christ without any cause existing in the blessed One, so God saved us without any cause or merit existing in ourselves. When there was nothing in us, or in our ways, that God could approve, then He loved us freely, and created in us that which was of His own holiness, and which alone He could love. It is those who are the most confident of the remission of their sins through shedding of blood, who are most emphatic in their testimony to pure grace. The danger comes in with the temptation to assume to self part of the work of redemption.

The parallel is wonderfully accurate in the work of effectual inward cleansing which ought always to follow the forgiveness of sins. Instantly that there finds lodgment in the soul the faintest thought of self-merit, to just that extent the fearful warning of Mal. ii. is found true. "If ye will not hear, if ye will not lay it to heart to give glory to My name, saith the Lord of hosts,

I will even send a curse upon you, and *I will curse your blessings*; yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart." Awful words of warning! May we lay them to heart while yet we believe unto righteousness—imparted as well as imputed righteousness—and confess unto a full salvation, exclaiming, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for *my* soul." Thus, as in the forgiveness of sins, while knowing results in our own souls of Christ's death and resurrection, he that glorieth shall glory in the Lord alone, and such an one may be led like Paul to say, "I have, therefore, whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ," or, "Ye are my witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblamably we behaved ourselves among you that believe."

After long and intimate intercourse with many who claim most for the triumphs of Christ in setting up His kingdom in their hearts, it is my matured conviction that there are none who are so truly humble and distrustful of self, and who so unfeignedly give God all the glory of His work,—none who are *practically* so free from legalism;—and this even in cases where their educational statements of doctrine differ from the language to God in their hearts in prayer or praise. As the acknowledgement of confidence in Christ for the forgiveness of sins, which once seemed to us self-exaltation, produced the only true humility when we ourselves entered upon it: just so true humility and safety is in the confession of what God has done for our souls in sanctification.

One of the dangers of this "highway" is, that having found the practical righteousness which comes by faith, and realizing how much it is beyond all former experience, the heart's confidence may be almost unconsciously shifted from a dependence on Christ to confidence in its own condition or attainment, even though it was at first received as a free gift. With such a change, the communication with the root is severed; and although the branch may for a time appear unchanged, it must sooner or later be cut off, if not restored. Christ must be the soul's perpetual centre. If He be not our centre, self will take His place, and each precious gift will be turned into a curse, until, like Nebuchadnezzar, loss of understanding is the result. We are called to glory, not by self-glorifying, but by glorifying God in our bodies and our spirits, which are God's. To the question, "What is the most dangerous doctrine?" a saint replied most truly, "*God's truth held carnally and to exalt self.*" There is no fall such as that from the height of a full communion with God to that depth of sin, robbing Christ of His glory in saving and sanctifying the soul. Our prayer should be, "Show me, O Lord, the very first approaches of evil!" The heart enlightened by the Spirit, and exercised by use to discern between good and evil, will, at the first moment of consciousness of temptation, fly to Jesus and cry, "Deliver me from the snare of the fowler!" It will not pray uncertainly, but in that joyous confidence of victory which is always honored by God.

There is danger everywhere while yet Satan is unchained, and there is danger of being so exclusively occupied with the superstructure, as for the time to lose sight of the only foundation which is laid—not that it is denied, but that it is not retained in its place. The mercy-seat must be kept continually in view. It is just here that many seekers after holiness, through the dark and even later ages within the pale of the Romish Church, conspicuously failed. It is here that some most excellent people, exemplary in many respects in their personal walk, have also missed of their privileges and power. A walk in the light does not cleanse, neither the walk nor the light can cleanse, but a true walk in the light brings to the blood, and that cleanses, effectually cleanses, from all sin.

It was not without purpose that the Holy Spirit placed between "the

riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints," in the first chapter, and the being "filled with all the fullness of God," in the third chapter of Ephesians, the humbling statements of the second chapter of our former death in trespasses and sins, when the living Spirit raised us up to "sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Nor was it without purpose that, in the midst of the high range of the revelations of this epistle, the Spirit should, in the limits of twenty-two words, emphasize in five statements, that salvation is "by grace," "through faith," "not of ourselves," "the gift of God," and "not of works." Were our lives on earth continued as many ages as we have seen days, our testimony would be to the blood for the forgiveness of the past, and the blood for present inward cleansing. Nor is the blood needful only to wash away defilement; it prevents defilement. The pebble by the roadside is often soiled, and the rain from heaven often again washes it; but if it be placed beneath the sparkling stream, it does not contract the defilement. So by faith

"We every moment have
The merit of His blood."

It would not be a true consecration to the priesthood were the blood omitted in its order—*first* the blood, *then* the oil. God's order is the blood for pardon, the Spirit to enlighten; the blood for cleansing, the Spirit to fill the purified temple of the living God.

We therefore solemnly warn any who believe that they are walking in the highway of holiness, that Satan has the power of transforming himself into an angel of light. The Romish superstition as to his fleeing at the sign of the cross, like many of their other fictions, has a foundation in truth; for whenever the Christian, whatever his advance, finds himself coming continually to the cross, living in sight of Calvary, while yet also risen with Christ in a life of resurrection-power, he may know that, while living thus, he cannot go astray. The cross separates from self-righteousness as effectually as from sins and sinning. All errorists, we are sure, have, either in doctrine outwardly, or in experience inwardly, lost sight of Calvary before yielding themselves to the guidance of Satan. It is just here in the constant reference to the atonement, that we look for the safety of that large class, in all denominations of Christians, who are seeking or enjoying what is practically included in the expressions, "dead indeed unto sin," "risen with Christ," and "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin."

Christ, then, is our Gibraltar. In Him we are safe; out of Him we are weaker than other men. No shafts can penetrate within our rock and strong tower. Should we be pierced, it would be because of not abiding in Christ. God be praised that we find in Christ sufficient provision for our safety and victory. Let us see to it that by prayer and faith we avail ourselves of it, not sometimes, but *always*.

COLD BATHS.



T is said to be the custom of the Esquimax, as soon as an infant is born, to plunge it once or twice into a bath of cold water, just to get it used, at the beginning of life, to the temperature it is expected to live in ever afterward. This may be a good plan for young Esquimax, but it is rather a bad one to be pursued with children new-born into God's kingdom; yet it is to be feared that in many of our churches, the presumptive, spiritual mothers of God's children, act upon this principle. They are so accustomed to a cold spiritual tempera-

ture themselves, that they take the new converts, especially if they come forth with a glow of spiritual life and power about them, and plunge them into a cold bath of "genteel propriety," and admonish them against "giving way to their feeling," and warn them against being demonstrative, and caution them not to be too confident, suggesting indirectly that doubts are better evidence of being a Christian than "full assurance of faith," quoting—out of connection—God's word, "let him that thinketh he standeth take heed," etc. If this does not cool them of sufficiently, another bath is resorted to and so on until the new converts are completely subdued and they grow up into consistent conformity to the icy mother who has brought them forth. Let us abandon the Esquimaux policy. If your churches live in the frigid zone, instead of trying to harden your converts into ice, better move into a more temperate spiritual climate, where the cold bath will not be necessary.

The Sainted Dead.

REV. GEORGE GOODSON.



REV. George Goodson was born in the British army, in England, of Irish parents, in 1810, and died in the Mission-house, St. Clair, on the 11th May, 1874. His parents died while he was very young. He was thus left to the care of strangers. But God took him up, and so guided him, that he came, at a comparatively early age, under the influence of Methodism. When about sixteen years of age he experienced converting grace in the town of Kingston, under the ministrations of Rev. Ephraim (now Dr.) Evans. His conversion was thorough and marked, and always referred to by him with great pleasure and confidence. He knew in whom he had believed, and was ever ready to witness a good profession. His experience was always freely given, and was clear and definite. In 1829 he was called to exhort sinners to "flee from the wrath to come," and, as an exhorter and local preacher, he performed much acceptable service; till, in 1836, he was called into the itinerant work by the Rev. Anson (now Dr.) Green. His first field of labor was Matilda Circuit, under the superintendence of Rev. Henry Shaler.

With what self-denying zeal, devotion, and success he labored on Matilda, Richmond, Hull, Perth, Napanee, Port Hope, Guelph, St. Catherines, Dundas, Milton, Owen Sound, Chatham, Sarnia, and Bradford Circuits, only those who were associated with him know. No doubt there are hundreds amongst the living and the dead who will rise up and call him blessed, as the instrument in the hands of God of their conversion.

Bro. Goodson was symmetrical, well formed, and prepossessing in physique; tasteful and neat in his attire, engaging and frank in his manners, with a heart full of kindness, and that kindness always beaming forth in

an open, guileless countenance. In any sphere which he might have been called to move in, he would have been popular. But the gifts and graces which he possessed eminently qualified him for the ministry, to which he devoted himself with so much energy for so many years.

He was a preacher of more than ordinary ability,—*emphatically*, a useful preacher. Clear in his conceptions of truth, ready in his utterance, and well read in the standard works of Methodism, as well as in general literature, he was never at a loss for words of power and grace, to impress, convince, reprove, comfort, and encourage those to whom he addressed himself.

But especially was our departed brother at home in the revival service and camp-meeting. Thousands will remember his earnest and pathetic appeals on such occasions, as well as the sweet melody of his voice while he sang, as he delighted to do, the songs of Zion.

For many years he occupied the responsible position of Chairman of a District, and was characterized by the qualities of mind and heart necessary to make a good administrator. He took a prominent part in Conference debates, and in all great Connexional questions, and was always conservative on questions affecting the great leading peculiarities of Methodism. The lovefeast, the class-meeting, and the itinerancy he believed to be of God, and not to be overthrown.

Bro. Goodson was a most affectionate husband, an indulgent father, a faithful friend, a most attached and patriotic subject and citizen, and a true and loyal Methodist minister. Early in his ministry, through exposure from long and weary travel on horseback, after excessive labors in special services,—and from poor accommodation, which was inevitable in those early days,—he received injury which often threatened his life, and from which he never fully recovered. But his constitution being remarkably good, he labored on through nearly forty years of uninterrupted service, never shunning sacrifice or responsibility, so that he might serve the Church of his choice and win souls to Jesus. His love for the work of the ministry was a holy passion, ever glowing, and literally consuming.

Brother Goodson's health had been visibly failing for two or three years. After a severe illness at Bradford two years ago, he was stationed on the St. Clair Mission, that there he might enjoy comparative rest. But the time had well nigh come for him to be released. Towards the close of March he showed very evident signs of rapidly declining life, though he still kept on at his work. He preached to his much-attached Indian congregation, on the 12th of April, his last sermon. He left home to try distant medical advice. No encouragement was received. He returned home to die. And looking the fact fully in the face, he felt that he was ready. He arranged his worldly affairs with great particularity of detail. He called his Indian leaders and local preachers to him in his sick room, and held his last official meeting. Counselling them much in regard to the future, and commending them to God most fervently, he bade them farewell.

Five daughters and one son, with their sorrowing mother, waited at his bedside, eager to render him aid or comfort. He had one paramount wish

for them,—that they might all embrace and love the Saviour, and prepare to meet him in heaven. They pledged themselves in the Holy Eucharist around his bed. It was a solemnly sublime scene. He received their pledge, and held them up to Christ with a faith which appeared prevailing, and called God to witness the consecration.

He spoke of his early associates in the ministry with great affection; mentioned his dearest friends in order; sent love to all his ministerial brethren; gave instructions respecting his funeral, and with the name of Jesus lingering on his lips, and a countenance radiant with hope, he passed away calmly, sweetly falling asleep in Jesus.

THE BLOOD OF SPRINKLING.

BY REV. J. E. RANKIN, D.D.



HIS blood, O Lord, speaks better things
Than Abel's blood of old,
As, rising on accusing wings,
To God its tale it told.

'Tis not of vengeance that it speaks,
Although I own it might;
No guilty culprit, Lord, it seeks,
Hiding in shame from sight.

No threatening face looks from the skies,
No searching voice is heard;
No trembling one in awe replies
To the accusing word.

It speaks of pardon and of peace,
Of variance reconciled;
It asks the guilty one's release,
And claims him as a child.

Thy blood, O holy Crucified,
From brow, and hands, and feet,
Pouring so free its crimson tide,
Has but this language sweet.

Miscellany.

SELECTIONS.

MADAME GUYON AND HER HYMNS.

BY REV. JOHN BRASH.

THE Church of Rome, corrupt and fallen as she is, does not hide from her votaries THE CROSS. However greatly overlaid with error, the truth essential to salvation is in her teaching; and in the darkest periods of her history there have been those who, coming to God with teachable, submissive hearts, have been led into light, affording examples of entire devotion to Christ as bright as any that are to be found in Protestantism. Not the least eminent of these saints was Madame Guyon. She lived in a dark age, and in circumstances that could hardly have been less favourable to piety; but though there were many errors in her creed, and some mistakes in her conduct, she attained to that state in which alone a human soul can find rest, and serve the purpose of its being—*union with Christ*.

She wrote an autobiography, of which Professor Upham gives the following account:—"After her return from Italy in 1686, La Combe, her spiritual director, in accordance with the authority allowed him by his Church, an authority to which she readily submitted, required her to make a written record of her past life. This she did for the most part when she was shut up, a year or two afterwards, in the convent of St. Marie in Paris. She proposed, as she would be likely to do under such circumstances, to make a selection of incidents; but La Combe, fearful that the deficiency of her feelings might prompt her to multiply omissions, required her to write everything. To this she at last consented, especially as

she did not, and could not well suppose that a biography, written under such circumstances, would ever be given to the public."

We purpose to give, in a few brief chapters, an outline of her religious history and experience, and also to reproduce some of her hymns—of which she wrote a great number—as translated by Cowper.

Her maiden name was Jeanne Marie Bouvière de la Mothe. She was born at Montargis, a town in France, on the 13th of April, 1648. Her education was conducted chiefly by nuns. When about eleven years of age, on going to reside in a Dominican convent, she found that a Bible had been left in the chamber assigned to her. She never could discover to whom she was indebted for so unusual and unexpected a boon, but she knew how to value it. "I spent whole days," she says, "in reading it, giving no attention to other books or other subjects from morning to night; and having great powers of recollection, I committed to memory the historical parts entirely." We do not find that the knowledge thus acquired of the Work of God was attended by any immediate result; but it is natural to suppose that it must have had a powerful influence upon the character of her piety in after life.

While under sixteen years of age, she was married, in obedience to her father's wishes, to M. Guyon, a wealthy nobleman more than twice her age. The union was not a happy one, but the trials it brought her were overruled for her good. She had a bitter experience of the emptiness of earthly joys, and in her disappointment and weariness resolved to seek the Lord. She had done this at former periods of her life, but through ignorance of the way of faith she had subjected herself to rigorous bodily austerities, under the erroneous notion, so common in her Church, of expiating sin by per-

sonal suffering. At this time, however, her sense of desolation was too great to allow her to be discouraged by the remembrance of past failures, and she renewed her search. For a while she pursued her former course, and with no better success. But one day, at her father's request, she visited a Franciscan friar who had spent five years in solitude, and had returned to society, inflamed with zeal for God and love for the souls of men. Having heard her story, the Franciscan remained silent for a while, and then said, "Your efforts have been unsuccessful, madame, because you have sought without, what you can only find within. Accustom yourself to seek God in your heart, and you will not fail to find Him." To us this counsel seems to be in some respects defective, but the Divine Spirit so applied it to the heart of Madame Guyon, who had been seeking religion in outward works and ceremonial duties, as to make it the instrument of her deliverance.

"Having said these words," she says, "the Franciscan left me. They were to me like the stroke of a dart which pierced my heart asunder. I felt at this instant deeply wounded with the love of God—a wound so delightful, that I desired it never might be healed. These words brought into my heart what I had been seeking so many years; or, rather, they made me discover what was there, which I did not enjoy for want of knowing it. Oh, my Lord! Thou wast in my heart, and demanded only the turning of my mind inward, to make me feel Thy presence. Oh, Infinite Goodness! Thou wast so near, and I ran hither and thither, seeking Thee, and yet found Thee not. My life was a burden to me, and my happiness was within myself. I was poor in the midst of riches, and ready to perish with hunger near a table plentifully spread, and a continual feast. Oh, Beauty, ancient and new! Why have I known Thee so late? Alas, I sought Thee where Thou wast not, and did not seek Thee where Thou wast! It was for want of understanding these words of Thy Gospel, 'The kingdom of God cometh not with observation, neither shall they say, Lo! here, or lo! there, for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.' This I now experienced, since Thou didst become my King, and my heart Thy kingdom, where Thou dost

reign a Sovereign, and doest all Thy will.

"I told this good man that I did not know what he had done to me; that my heart was quite changed; that God was there; for from that moment He had given me an experience of His presence in my soul—not merely as an object intellectually perceived, but as a thing really possessed after the sweetest manner. I experienced these words in the Canticles: 'Thy name is as precious ointment poured forth; therefore do the virgins love Thee.' For I felt in my soul an unction, which, as a salutary perfume, healed in a moment all my wounds. I slept not all that night, because Thy love, O my God! flowed in me like delicious oil, and burned as a fire which was going to destroy all that was left of self in an instant. I was all on a sudden so altered, that I was hardly to be known either by myself or others. I found no more those troublesome faults, or that reluctance to duty, which formerly characterized me. They all disappeared, as being consumed like chaff in a great fire.

"Nothing was more easy to me now than to practice prayer. Hours passed away like moments, while I could hardly do anything else but pray. The fervency of my love allowed me no intermission. It was a prayer of rejoicing and of possession, wherein the taste of God was so great, so pure, unblended and uninterrupted, that it drew and absorbed the powers of the soul into a profound recollection, a state of confiding and affectionate rest in God, existing without intellectual effort. *For I had now no sight but of Jesus Christ alone.* All else was excluded, in order to love with greater purity and energy, without any motives or reasons for loving which were of a selfish nature."

The following poem describes her feelings at this time:—

LOVE AND GRATITUDE.

"All are indebted much to Thee,
But I far more than all;
From many a deadly snare set free,
And raised from many a fall.
Overwhelm me from above
Daily with Thy boundless love.

"What bonds of gratitude I feel
No language can declare;
Beneath the oppressive weight I reel,
'Tis more than I can bear.

When shall I that blessing prove,
To return Thee love for love?

"Spirit of Charity! Dispense
Thy grace to every heart;
Expel all other spirits thence,
Derive self from every part.
Charity Divine! draw nigh;
Break the chains in which we lie.

"All selfish souls, whate'er they feign,
Have still a slavish lot;
They boast of liberty in vain,
Of love, and feel it not.
He whose bosom glows with Thee,
He, and he alone, is free.

"Oh, blessedness, all bliss above,
When Thy pure fires prevail;
Love only teaches what is love,
All other lessons fail;
We learn its name, but not its powers,
Experience only makes it ours."

—*King's Highway.*

THE HIGHER CHRISTIAN LIFE.

WHEN I approach this subject of the Higher Christian Life, so many thoughts struggle for utterance, that I am rendered almost speechless. Where shall I begin? What is the most important thing to say? How shall I make people read and believe? The subject is so glorious, and human words seem so powerless!

But something must be said by some one.

THE SECRET MUST BE TOLD.

It is one concerning that victory which overcometh the world; that promised delivery from all your enemies, for which you have often and intensely longed, but which has seemed so continually to elude your grasp.

Every child of God longs for victory, and nearly every one feels, instinctively, at times, that it is his birth-right. Can you not remember, some of you, the shout of triumph your souls gave, when you first became acquainted with the Lord Jesus, and had a glimpse of his mighty saving power? How sure you were of victory, then! How easy it seemed to be more than conquerors, through him that loved you! Under the leadership of a Captain who had never been foiled in battle, how could you dream of defeat? And yet, to many of you, how different has been your real experience. The victories have been

few and fleeting, the defeats many and disastrous. You have not lived as you feel children of God ought to live. And your souls have sunk within you, as, day after day, and year after year, your early visions of triumph have seemed to grow dimmer and dimmer, and you have been forced to settle down to the conviction, that the best you can expect from your religion is a life of alternate failure and victory; one hour sinning, and the next repenting and beginning again, only to fail again, and again to repent.

BUT IS THIS ALL?

Had the Lord Jesus only this in his mind, when he laid down his precious life, to deliver you from your sore and cruel bondage of Satan? Did he propose to himself only this partial deliverance? Did he intend to leave you thus struggling along, under a weary consciousness of defeat and discouragement? Did he fear that a continuous victory would dishonour him and bring reproach on his name? When all those declarations were made concerning his coming, and the work he was to accomplish, did they mean only this that you have experienced? Was there a hidden reserve in each promise, that was meant to deprive it of its complete fulfilment? Did "redeem us from all iniquity" mean only from a portion? Did "enabling us always to triumph" mean only sometimes? No, no, a thousand times No! God is able to save us to the uttermost, and he meant to do it. This promise, confirmed by his oath, was, that "He would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life." It is a mighty work to do, but our Deliverer is able to do it. He came to destroy the works of the devil, and dare we dream for a moment that he is not able or not willing to accomplish his own purposes?

In the very onset, then, settle down on this one thing: that Jesus came to save you fully, now, in this life, from the power and dominion of sin, and to deliver you altogether out of the hands of your enemies. If you do not think he did, search your Bibles, and collect together every announcement or declaration concerning the purposes and object

of his death on the cross. You will be astonished to find how full they are. Everywhere and always his work is said to be to deliver us from our sins, from our bondage, from our defilement: and not a hint is given, anywhere, that this deliverance was to be only the limited and partial one, with which the Church so continually tries to be satisfied. The God who hates sin in the sinner, never suggests the thought that he is willing to

TOLERATE IT IN THE CHRISTIAN;

and he who knew how deep-seated was the disease, always declares that the remedy he has provided is able to work a complete cure. The first step, therefore, is to convince yourselves of this fact from the Scriptures. Do not ask yourself, or your friends. Do not consult your own past experience, nor the past experience of others. Do not look at your weakness, nor at your mighty temptations. Ask God. Consult his Word. Look at the Lord Jesus, and at his strength. Compare your enemies with him, not with yourself. Believe what he says; and may he grant that, before another week comes round, you may know from the testimony of his own Word, that he is able to save you—even you—from all your enemies, and to give you perfect rest in himself.

THE BRAVE MORAVIAN.

It is narrated of a Moravian. I know not if in any other name of Christians could be found an instance that can parallel this:

A Moravian Christian heard of the sufferings of the West India slaves, and desired to be a missionary to them; but when he reached them, he found they were driven to the field so early, and came home so late, that there was no life or strength in them to listen to his instructions; neither did they believe that any man whose face was white had a heart that was other than black, and they would not listen to him; and he found, at last, that there was no way to preach to them unless he preached to them in their sufferings while he suffered with them himself. He sold himself, and

was driven afield with them that while he suffered and toiled as they did, he might have opportunity to preach to them the unsearchable riches of Christ. Now, I ask if there reigns a king upon his throne that was so lordly, so large a man as that poor sweating Moravian, who, for the sake of serving these poor, miserable, dying slaves in the field, had sold himself into like estate to preach the riches of Christ. The largest conception of manhood is that which knows how to take itself, as though of no consequence to itself, but of all possible consequence to those to whom it may make itself an offering, a power, and an instruction.

LOVEFEAST.

A MORE EXCELLENT WAY.

BY REV. J. W. HILL.

It has been impressed on my mind for some time that a short narrative of my experience might benefit some anxious inquirer after holiness.

At the age of nineteen I was so clearly and powerfully converted as to preclude all doubt as to my acceptance with God through Jesus Christ. Shortly after this my good old Methodist uncle urged me to seek sanctification. For several weeks I sought the blessing in earnest. The more I prayed the darker it seemed. When I came to the conclusion I was giving up a certainty for an uncertainty, abandoning all special effort for holiness, I concluded to fall back and improve upon present attainments. Shortly after this I entered the ministry, and for about sixteen years preached the gospel of the anti-specialists, leaving holiness to take care of itself, only in so far as it was involved in growth in grace.

A short time after the first National Camp-meeting at Urbana, our conference (Central Ohio) convened at Kenton. There I met with a number of brethren who had been to the Urbana meeting, many of whom professed to have attained sanctification. As I sat and listened to the experiences of these men,

"I was dumb with silence." I attended meeting every morning at five o'clock, but I opened not my mouth. I saw and felt that they had turned a new leaf in their Christian experience. Some of them were old and honored ministers, whom I had known for years; but they were *new men now*. They were luxuriating amid golden promises hitherto hid from the full gaze of faith.

I returned to my charge at Ada, determined to investigate the subject of holiness, and bring it before my people. I wrote out a sermon on holiness, using standard authors in our church for my guide. I tried to preach this to my people, but it was clear and cold. It was a mere skeleton, without flesh or life. During the winter I took great interest in preaching holiness as a growth in grace. The change in my feelings and manner became sufficiently marked to be entitled "a new departure;" but as yet I had arrived at nothing definite on the subject. Hearing of the second camp-meeting of the National Association, to be held at Urbana, I, with several of my brethren, resolved to go. I had been trying to solve the problem of holiness by metaphysical reasoning and mathematical demonstration, but could not define the boundary lines between justification, regeneration, and sanctification. I wanted to advance. I felt that I had received marching orders; but "how to perform I knew not."

I went to Urbana Camp-meeting, resolved to make the best of it. I was anxious to hear a few sermons explaining my difficulties. Arriving on the tented field the day previous, I anxiously awaited the opening service. At two o'clock the following day the bell rang as a signal for the gathering of the people. Bro. Inskip arose and announced the nature of the meeting; and, after assuming the responsibility of it, so far as human instrumentality was concerned, he asked those who enjoyed the blessing of a pure heart to arise. A large number arose. He then called upon those who desired a clean heart to arise. Quite a number arose, my wife and self included. Bro. Inskip immediately asked the people to vacate the altar, and called upon all those who desired the blessing to come forward. The people commenced crowding to the altar, my wife among the number. I hesitated: I was not

ready. I had heard no explanation of the doctrine, and did not see my way clear to advance. But I had just committed myself as a seeker of holiness, and felt that, to be consistent, I ought to go forward. Advancing to the altar I knelt among the seekers, and commenced trying to pray. Bro. Inskip urged each one to pray for himself, which I tried to do. At this time the brethren commenced singing the verse,

"Take my poor heart," etc.,

I cried out, "Lord Jesus, take my poor heart!" and somehow I believed he *was* taking it, and that he *did* take it. Glory be to God! Jesus came to me personally and sensibly to the eye of faith. I knew the great work was fully wrought. I became as helpless as an infant: falling into the arms of Jesus I cried, with emphasis, "O my Saviour! O my Saviour!" From that moment I felt he was mine in a more comprehensive and deeper sense than ever before. My soul was basking in the sunlight of God's perfect love.

Arising from that hallowed spot I felt I had found the "home of the soul" in the great heart of Jesus. I was not only at home with Jesus, but with all the brethren of the Association, and at home with the movement. Glory be to God for full salvation! The brethren of the Association will remember me as the first man saved at that memorable camp-meeting.

Now I was ready for the sermons, every one of which was as plain as the alphabet to my soul. Oh! how I thanked God again and again that he defeated all plans, and lifted me out of all mysticism and up into the light of holiness before I ever heard a sermon on the campground. What they said then was self-evident truth, demonstrated by the power of the Holy Ghost on my poor heart.

I came home to my circuit a new man; told the people what great things God had done for me; and from that time to the present I have been preaching *present tense* holiness through faith. My people gladly receive the doctrine, and many rejoice in the great salvation, and take and read the *Advocate of Christian Holiness*. Brethren, pray for me.—*Advocate*.

Editor's Portfolio.

DANIEL QUORM AT CLASS.

—
"SLOW AND SURE."
—

BRO. QUORM met his Sunday morning class at eight o'clock, in what was called by courtesy the parlour, but really the sanded front kitchen at Thomas Toms. Next to the leader's name was that of Sally Toms, or "Granny," as every body called her, an old woman bordering upon a hundred, who had been in society for eighty years. Cut off as she was by old age and infirmity from all other services, this united singing and prayer, the faces of old friends, and the talk about "good things," was her solace and strength. There was no doubt about it; it did her good, as she said, "body and soul;" bless the Lord, "body and soul;" and to those who came, it was as good as a sermon—better than some sermons, perhaps, to look at her . . . and how cosy and snug the place used to feel! A vestry has not any homeliness in it, somehow. You feel that folks don't live there, and you cannot readily make yourself quite at home in it. Then, at Thomas Toms', was the canary, hanging in the window, that always began to sing when the hymn was given out, just as if he had been a regular member of the class. And there were homlier touches that make men talk about religion in a simple, every-day tone, the like of which it is hard to get in a vestry. Much of that strong social union to which Methodism has been so greatly indebted, and which in

oldtime she so carefully fostered, came from the fact that the people went from "house to house;" the class-meetings and the prayer-meetings were in the houses of the people, and the church itself was not unfrequently the "church in the house." When young members began to talk of their fears and hinderances, Daniel's sharp eye would look towards "Granny," the old saint uttering a dozen notes of exclamation all at once. "Hindrances!!! Hindrances!! Aw, my dear. Begin to talk about hinderances. Granny can mind hearing 'em ring the church bells 'cause they'd clean drove the Methodists out o' the parish. Hindrances, my dear, why, she can mind hearin' 'em talk of a mon down to Penzance was put in prison for blasphemy 'cause the Lord had forgiven his sins. Why, my dear, don't let us go talkin' about it—we be going to heaven in silver slippers 'hy, mother, you used to walk sixteen miles 'pon the Sunday." "Rain or fine," said Granny, with a nod. "Iss, we be goin' in silver slippers." . . . "In silver slippers, and that be the hindrance. We do make our hinderances. It be easier to go barefoot than in tight shoes. Rain now-a-days be a hindrance; but in mother's time it was'nt. But 'tis just your own fault; for we do wear such fine bonnets and cloaks that a sprinkle o' rain and they're spoiled in a minute Don't o talk like that, my dear. We don't know what hinderances be now-a-days, 'cept a few as don't come from heaven above, nor earth beneath,"

but they be *home-made*, every one of 'em home-made, slow and sure.

There is just inside the door of the parlour Jim Tregoinney, a well-meaning kind of man, whom people spake of as "poor fellow," and said how unfortunate he was. . . . When his turn came, he spoke with a sigh. "'How was he gettin' on?' Well, he feared he was only a slow traveller heavenward. But he had many trials—fightings without and within—and he hoped that his motto was slow and sure, slow and sure; for the race wasn't to the wise nor to the strong, but it were to the sure. If he couldn't fly he must walk; and if he could not walk he must creep; and if he was not so fast a traveller as some folks, he hoped he was just as sure." There was a tone of grief and pain in Daniel's reply. "'La, Jim, whatever do 'e mean? 'Slow and sure, slow and sure.' Always the same. Never no forwarder, never no backwarder, but a stickin' in the same place. I'll tell 'e what, Jim, your slow and sure folks be just like a faggot o' green furze 'pon the fire. You don't blaze nor burn, but do steam and fizz, and go fillin' the house with smirk and smoke. Do'e get out o' this here way. *Strive* to enter in at the straight gate; but goin' along so slow you will be sure not to get through un. 'Slow and sure!' Iss, sure to be too late. 'Tis what the folks said when they was a commin' to the ark; but the floods came quick and sure on them before they got to the ark, and slow and sure was drowned. Serve 'em right, too. The virgins was slow and sure when they were a-gone to buy oil for their lamps; and when they came back, *the door was shut*. 'Slow and sure.' 'Tis damp powder that do burn like that there, Jim—it'll choke all with smoke, but it won't ever heave a rock in two, or do nobody a morsel o' good. An then troubles and trials—of course you do have them—heaps of 'em. What else can anybody expect? 'Slow and sure.' Go creepin' along! Why, of course there's never a trouble or trial but it comes up to you. Spread your wings, Jim. Spread your wings out, and fly! They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength: and shall *mount*, mount, Jim;—they shall mount up with wings as eagles! Old care is a black-winged, croaking old raven; but he can't catch the eagle—can't get up high enough. 'They shall mount up with wings as eagles: they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk, and not faint.'

"My dear Jim, there bean't no such thing as this slow and sure o' yours. When the top do spin slow he's sure to come down. 'Tisu't

the way the angels told Lot. *Escape for thy life*: tarry not on all the plain; and I don't think we shall get off easier than he did. And 'tisn't the way Paul knew anything about; for, says he, '*Run the race set before you*.' He don't say anything about creepin', and it be best to stick to the word Jim. 'Slow and sure!'—Seem to me that every thing be the other way about. Time is swift and sure, Jim, and death is swift and sure, and the love of Jesus is swift and sure. Ah, bless the Lord, how swift and sure that is, you know Jim, as well as the rest! When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and *ran*. Daniel's voice *ran*,—and spoke with a tenderness that brought the tears to every eye "no creepin' then, or walking either. He ran, and fell on his neck and kissed him. A, bless the Lord, and that's his way always—and his way be always best;" and he brushed away the tears from his eye as he finished. "Come, friends, let us sing a hymn,—

"My soul, through my Redeemer's care,
Saved from the second death I feel,
My eyes from tears of dark despair,
My feet from falling into hell.

"Wherefore to him my feet shall run,
[That's it, *run*.]
My eye on his perfections gaze,
My soul shall live for God alone,
And all within me shout his praise.

—*City Road Magazine*.

"EARNEST CHRISTIANITY" travels far and wide. It is read on many of the Mission fields of the church, and even in far-off Japan. A few weeks ago we received the subjoined communication from a new correspondent away at Williams' Creek, Carbioo. Accompanying the article was a note, in which the following sentences occur:—"This is the first time I ever attempted to write for the English press. Until a few years ago it was a complete foreign language to me." We don't know our correspondent's nationality; he may be Frenchman, German, Scandinavian, or "heathen Chinee," for aught we can tell. But one thing is plain: he speaks the language of Canaan; so we hail him as "a fellow-citizen of the saints." We have made a few changes in the article where foreign idioms were used; but the thoughts, and most of the language, are his own:—

MAKE THE BEST OF YOUR
OPPORTUNITIES.

BY JOHN LUMLEY.

"O! I am so sorry we did not go up last week when it was fine," was the expression of a pale-faced, but thoughtful lady, in my presence, a few months ago, because she did not go up to the Bold Mountain in C——, to behold the glory of nature. "Probably," she continued, "I shall never get the same chance again. In June next, we have to leave here too early to go up, and I will feel so bad because I did not go while I was here." And she looked so disappointed, because she had lost her only opportunity.

So it came to pass. The week she referred to was a sunny week in September. The sky was clear, and nature robed in all its Autumn beauty. After that the weather changed suddenly, and the winter closed in. And so the lady lost her opportunity; and most likely she never will have the same chance again.

Dear reader, does not the above resemble what we often see and hear at dying beds? Is not this the language of thousands who have lost their opportunities of doing good, and, it may be, the chance of saving their souls? "O! I am so sorry, because I did not make the best use of my time when I was well. O! how many times I passed the door of the house of God and did not go in, but went to the whiskey shop, or some other wicked place? And how many times have I listened to Christ's invitation, through His servants, to come to Him for the salvation of my soul? But I did not hearken to His voice. I put every thing off to some better time, to suit myself. But, now, here I am, my health is gone, and that promised time has never come. The sunny week has passed away." In agony of mind he turns his face towards the wall, saying:—"The clear sky is changed. It is cloudy and cold. The winter of my life is closing in, and all my bright hopes are dying with it. O! I am sorry. I fear this is my last day. I lost my opportunities. Most likely, when I shall leave this bed, instead of returning to the outward world, I shall be carried to my grave." Lifting up his hands in remorse, he cries,—*"O! what shall I do! I shall be lost for ever, unless Christ now have mercy upon my soul!"*

My dear, healthy young reader, now is your sunny week; you are enjoying the beauty of your life's summer. Make the best of your

opportunity, and come to God. In the spring of the year 1870, I was working with a man from Canada,—a fine, kind-hearted man,—but he was ungodly, and in the habit of using very profane language. One day I said to him, "B——, it would be better for you to quit that kind of language and prepare to meet God." "O," he said, in a cold and thoughtless way, "five minutes before death will be time enough to do that." "Yes, I said, "but have you security to have those five minutes?" In the same spring, he went with three others in a boat, to another part of the country, to seek after gold. The boat upset, and he sank to the depths like a stone, and his soul went to eternity without the five minutes! My dear friend, don't throw away your time and opportunity, but come to God now. He calls upon you to come; He wants you to come. His church on earth, and all the angels in heaven will be glad to see you coming. Come! your soul needs to be saved! "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation."

ACCESS TO GOD.

HOWEVER early in the morning you seek the gate of access, says the Rev. Dr. Hamilton, of London, you find it already open; and however deep the midnight moment when you find yourself in the sudden arms of death, the winged prayer can bring an instant Saviour; and this wherever you are. It needs not that you ascend some special Pisgah or Moriah. It needs not that you should enter some awful shrine, or pull off your shoes on some holy ground. Could a memento be reared on every spot from which an acceptable prayer has passed away, and on which a prompt answer has come down, we should find Jehovah-shammah, "the Lord has been here," inscribed on many a cottage hearth, and many a dungeon floor. We should find it not only in Jerusalem's proud temple and David's cedar galleries, but in the fisherman's cottage by the brink of the Gennesaret, and in the upper chamber where the pentecost began. And whether it may be the field where Isaac went down to mediate, or the rocky knoll where Israel wrestled, or the den where Daniel gazed on the hungry lions, and the lions gazed on him, or the hillside where the Man of Sorrows prayed all night, we should still discern the ladder's feet let down from heaven—the landing-place of mercies, because the starting-place of prayer.

WE SHALL REST.

"That they may rest from their labours."—Rev. xiv. 16.

Words by F. J. C.]

[Music by B. C. UNSELD.

May be Sung as a Duet.

1. Let us work for God and fol - low His com - mands, With a cheer - ful heart and
 2. He will give us strength our vig - our to re - new, He will grant us grace that
 3. To a glo - rious work He call - eth us a - way; Let us bear the heat and

ev - er will - ing hands; In the field of life re - joic - ing ev - ery day, Let us
 fall - eth like the dew; And the seeds of love im - mor - tal fruit shall bear, Ev - er
 bur - den of the day; 'Tis the faith - ful souls that reap the bright reward At the

We shall rest..... by and by.....

work and trust and pray,
 guard - ed by His care.
 com - ing of the Lord. } CHORUS. We shall rest, by and by,

In a land..... bright and

Sweet - ly rest when earth - ly toil is o'er,
 In a land

fair.

bright and fair, We shall rest when earth - ly toil is o'er.