

Practical Papers.

EASTERTIDE; OR, THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

BY THE EDITOR.

V.—THE BURIAL.

“ And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, an honorable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus. And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead : and calling the Centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead. And when he knew it of the Centurion, he gave the body to Joseph.”—MARK xv. 42-5.

“ And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pounds. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden ; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day ; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.”—JOHN xix. 39-42.

“ And [they] rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre. And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus beheld where he was laid.”—MARK xv. 46, 47.

“ Rest of the weary ! Thou
Thyself art resting now,
Where lowly in thy sepulchre thou liest :
From out her deathly sleep
My soul doth start, to weep,
So sad a wonder, that thou, Saviour, diest !

“ Thy bitter anguish o'er,
To this dark tomb they bore
Thee, life of life—Thee, Lord of all creation !
The hollow rocky cave
Must serve Thee for a grave,
Who wast Thyself the Rock of our Salvation !”—FRANCE.



“ AND now when the even was come.” By “even” in this connection, is probably meant the interval between three o'clock and sunset. The Greek reads, — *Και ήδη ὀψίας γενομένης*,—literally, “And now even was approaching.” The Jews reckoned two evenings: one from the ninth hour, or three o'clock in the afternoon, until sunset; the other from sunset until dark. The supernatural darkness, we are informed, began at the sixth hour,—that is, the hour of noon,—and continued until the ninth hour, at which time Jesus gave up the ghost. Within the next three hours some disposition must be made of the bodies of those who had been crucified, for Jewish law (Deut. xxi. 23) forbade that they should remain on the crosses

over night, and the "day of preparation" for the Sabbath ended at six o'clock in the evening, after which no work must be done. It was on this account, and also because the coming Sabbath was regarded as a high day in connection with the feast—a day of peculiar sanctity—that the chief priests requested Pilate to hasten the death of the victims, that their bodies might be removed. We have here an illustration of the fact that ungodly men often work out, unconsciously, the purposes of God. The action of the priests secured two things: 1. The fulfilment of an important typical prophecy concerning Christ, and, 2. An indubitable proof that he was really dead. The Roman soldiers, on receiving Pilate's order, at once broke the legs of the two malefactors, but touched not the sacred limbs of Jesus; and thus the word was fulfilled, "A bone of him shall not be broken." In order, however, to dispel any lingering uncertainty as to his death, one of the soldiers with a spear pierced the Saviour's side, inflicting a wound that, apart from the sufferings of crucifixion, was sufficient to cause instant death.

Yes, Jesus is dead; but who will give him burial? The foes have vanished from Golgotha: who among the friends and confessors will now appear? Among the thousands who throng the streets of Jerusalem, is there one who will approach Calvary with a friendly purpose? Doubtless, had the Jews been left to take their own course, Jesus would never have found a resting place in the tomb of Joseph. As they had doomed him to a felon's death, so they would have given him a felon's burial, at the grim "place of a scull." But God, who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will, had otherwise decreed. Centuries before, the voice of prophecy had declared that he should rest "with the rich in his death, because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth;" and God never lacks instruments to carry out his designs. But whence will come the loving hearts and gentle hands to bear him to his rest? Will not Peter come?—he who said but a little while ago, "Though all men should deny thee, yet will not I?" Alas! Peter is weeping in solitary anguish over his own sad fall, and thinks not of a work like this. Will not John come?—he who leaned on Jesus' breast at the Supper; who was with him on the mount when he was transfigured, as well as in Gethsemane when he prayed? Overwhelmed with sorrow—utterly disheartened by the sudden and terrible overthrow of hopes that had been so bright—John thinks not of this last tribute of love to the Master. Will not some of those whom Jesus healed of bodily and spiritual maladies, come? So we might expect; but alas, fear is stronger than gratitude, and not one of these rescued ones dares avow his love for the crucified Nazarene. Whence, then, will come the faithful ones to give Jesus burial? Not from among the disciples who had followed him for years; not from among the blind whom he had restored to sight, or the sick whom he had healed, or the lepers who had been cleansed by his word; but, wonderful to relate, from among the members of the Sanhedrim—the tribunal before which he had been adjudged to die. "Joseph of Arimathea, an honorable councillor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus."

Of the previous history of Joseph of Arimathea we know little or nothing; but in the brief glimpse of the man here afforded, several suggestive facts are brought to light. 1. He was a councillor—a member of the Sanhedrim, and from what we know of the spirit and temper of that body, we may infer that Joseph's surroundings were not the most favorable to the growth of a kind and loving spirit. But in spite of adverse circumstances he maintained his integrity, and we have this honorable testimony concerning him that he was "a good man and a just." Evidently Joseph had not adopted the vicious maxim that a thing is right because the majority wills it; nor had he learned the art of merging his conscience in that of a corporate body; and hence, when the Council condemned Jesus to die, he opposed the unjust decree. In this godless council there was one godly councillor, showing how God will have his witnesses and confessors in the most unlikely places, and how the spirit of true piety may flourish under circumstances which are, humanly speaking, the least favorable to its growth. 2. He was rich; and the rich have not always been the first to follow Christ. Riches oft take to *themselves* wings; but they seldom *lend* wings to him who would soar heavenward. "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God;" but, to the praise of Divine grace be it said, the rich *do* sometimes enter in, "for with God all things are possible." Wealth, in itself, is not an evil: it is only when we misuse it that it becomes a clog to the soul. Riches wisely employed may be a help rather than a hindrance, for by its means we may still show our love to Jesus in the persons of his poor disciples; and he who ministers to the wants of the poor while they live, puts the crown upon his work of benevolence by giving them honorable burial when they die. 3. There is another circumstance connected with Joseph that we must not omit: "he was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews." Now there is a zeal without knowledge that regards such persons with grave suspicion, even if it does not declare their piety to be altogether spurious. But let us not judge hastily. Let us not, with such an example before us, rashly say there cannot be such a thing as secret discipleship. The "kingdom of heaven" is like the seed which groweth secretly, and that seed may be quietly germinating in the heart for many a day before, in some unexpected hour, its rich fruitage appears. That it is a duty to confess Christ openly we know; but we also know that the loudest profession is not always associated with the most consistent practice. Boasting is no proof of courage, nor is the reckless challenging of every foe we meet any evidence of true Christian heroism; and he who has rightly estimated the perils of the Christian warfare, will not rush into danger unless duty clearly points that way. In any case let us not despise the day of small things: the weak believer may yet become the heroic confessor. "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations."

Joseph, the secret disciple, does what no other disciple dares to do: he goes in boldly unto Pilate, and begs the body of Jesus. Strange that, through the death of Jesus, his secret disciples should get power to confess him openly! Still there are traits of Christian character which develop only in some crisis

of life; and it accords with all Christian experience that faith grows stronger in trial, just as the oak is more firmly rooted by the tempest. Joseph's self-imposed task was fraught with no small danger. We may well suppose that, after the events of the day, Pilate would be in no kindly mood, and that nothing could be less welcome to his chafed spirit, than interference on behalf of the blameless Nazarene whom he had unjustly condemned. Besides this, the hatred of the priests toward Jesus was undiminished, and they were prepared to regard with the keenest suspicion any act which might seem to indicate the remotest acknowledgment of his claims. Joseph must have been aware of all this; but impelled by the love which "casteth out fear," he braves the danger, and asks for the body of his Lord.

Pilate is moved by an unwonted spirit of humanity, and grants the request, but first desires to be assured that Jesus is really dead. The centurion is called, (the same who had watched by the cross, who had heard the Saviour's dying cry, and had seen his side cleft by the soldier's spear), and gives his testimony. There is no more room for doubt, and Pilate gives consent that the body be removed.

Hastening away to fulfil his pious task, Joseph is joined by another member of the Sanhedrim. "There came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night." What! another *secret* disciple? Even so; but a *secret* disciple no longer. The feelings of mingled fear and shame which possessed his heart when, but a few months before, he stole cautiously along the streets of Jerusalem under the shadows of night, shrouding his face in his mantle lest any one should recognize him and guess his errand, have entirely passed away, and now with a tender pity and a fearless faith Nicodemus goes with Joseph, in the broad light of day, to inter the body of his Lord. At what particular time this spiritual revolution took place in the mind of Nicodemus we cannot tell. Perhaps the words that Jesus spake during the memorable midnight interview have been lying dormant in his heart, and now, in the crisis-hour, spring up suddenly with an hundred-fold increase. Perhaps in sight of Calvary he has entered into the mighty meaning of the Saviour's words: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up," and by that revelation has been lifted into an atmosphere of moral heroism that renders him insensible to fear. Be that as it may, it is manifest the mighty change has been wrought, and Nicodemus is henceforth to be numbered among the open confessors of the Lord.

Nicodemus, coming to inter the body of Jesus, comes not empty handed. His was not the cheap sympathy that walks decorously behind the solemn hearse, and expends itself in dreary platitudes of condolence: he "brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pounds weight. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury." Yes, undoubtedly such *was* "the manner of the Jews," when weeping love followed parent or child to the sepulchre, or when ostentatious wealth would give its possessor a resting-place among the "tombs of the kings;" but such was *not* "the manner of the Jews" when

society's outcasts perished by the wayside, or when a doomed felon expiated his crimes on the accursed tree. For such there was no "myrrh and aloes," or "linen clothes;" but, dying the outcast's death, they found refuge at last in an outcast's unhallowed grave. In the pious task, therefore, of Joseph and Nicodemus, we recognize something more than a transient pity for one who had suffered much. It may be said, humanity would prompt them to give Jesus burial; but no such feeling led them to inter the felons who had perished by his side; and so we recognize in their act the workings of a faith which, through the deep humiliation of Jesus, caught glimpses of his coming glory; which saw clearly the injustice of his condemnation when viewed from the human side; but which saw, at the same time, though dimly, its awful meaning when viewed in connection with the purposes of God; and who shall say that there was not, with all this, a presentiment, at least, of the wondrous sequel to the burial which they gave?

I love to contemplate the work of these pious friends. Everything about it seems fraught with suggestive thought. We instinctively contrast the gifts presented to Jesus as he entered the world, with this gift as he leaves it. The wise men brought the sweet frankincense; Nicodemus brings the bitter aloes and myrrh. Both were appropriate: one the tribute of welcome at his coming, the other the sad tribute to his memory when he was gone; but I cannot repress the thought that the myrrh and aloes—love's tribute to the dead Christ—exhaled a sweeter fragrance to heaven than the frankincense that hailed the living King of the Jews. And then look at the richness of the gift, "an hundred pounds weight!" There is a spirit, like that of Judas, ready to say of such matters, "This might have been sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor;" and a narrow-minded utility would say,—“Is not this far more than is necessary?” But love never asks, How little will do? but, How much can I give?

From the preparations thus made for the burial of Jesus, there is another lesson which we may profitably carry away: It is sometimes said,—“When a man is dead, it matters not what becomes of his body.” I cannot think so. The body should be honored because it is the garment of the soul, still more because it is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and also because we believe that a time is coming when “this corruptible shall put on incorruption,” and that which “is sown in weakness” shall be “raised in power.” We should give our departed friends honorable burial, not only as a tribute of affection to their memory, but as an act in keeping with that precious article of our faith: “I believe in the resurrection of the body.”

The next step in the narrative brings us into the presence of strange and painful contrasts: “In the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre.” Wondrous mystery of human existence here! Life and death—the garden and the sepulchre—always associated. The first garden over whose happy groves the shadow of death was thrown; the sepulchre of Macpelah, in the midst of the fruitful field of the Sons of Heth, where Abraham, the “heir of the promises,” buried his dead out of his sight; the garden of Gethsemane, with its wealth of olive trees—symbols of

peace,—yet beneath their shadows the mysterious anguish of the Son of Man; and now the garden near to Calvary, and in the garden a sepulchre! And yet this very association has a bright as well as a gloomy—a heavenward as well as an earthward—side. If it saddens us to think how death invades the fairest scenes, and sepulchres are to be found in the loveliest gardens; it comforts us to know that flowers *will* bloom even upon graves, and that around the sepulchres of the dead these emblems of the resurrection glory utter their silent prophecy to cheer our sorrowing hearts.

This garden belonged to Joseph of Arimathea. The slopes of Olivet and the sides of the Kedron Valley were thickly studded with such enclosures; and it was no uncommon thing for a wealthy Jew to prepare in his garden a sepulchre where he might rest at last. This Joseph had done; but little did he think, at the time, for what a distinguished guest that sepulchre was being prepared. Now, however, the providence of God in its construction is fulfilled in its occupancy. The new tomb receives its appointed trust, while death stands sentry at the gloomy portal.

“There laid they Jesus.” Thank God for that! It has transformed the very grave; it has hallowed forever the resting-place of the sainted dead. Our dear departed ones sleep not in the dark, hopeless graves of heathenism, nor in the isolated and rocky sepulchres of Judaism; but gathered together by Him who has sanctified these quiet chambers—they *rest* from their labors in *Christian* graves. It is to this precious historic fact that we may trace the rise of that beautiful sentiment which leads Christians to-day to seek out the fairest spots, and consecrate them as the resting-places of the dead.

And now the hasty rites of sepulture are ended. They have laid the body of Jesus in the new tomb, they have “rolled a stone unto the door,” while watching love beholds where he is laid, that it may come again when the Sabbath is ended and give the body a more careful anointing. It is the closing hour of the week, and again, as at the end of the first creation, Jesus “rests from his labors on the Sabbath day.” The faithful few—the first “Church of the Holy Sepulchre”—turn sadly away. We turn with them, leaving behind us the quiet grave and the peaceful sleeper, and carrying away one last lesson from the hallowed spot: As the dead Christ lay in a new tomb, so the living Christ will dwell only in a new heart.

(*To be continued.*)

To the soul resting on Jesus there is always peace in believing; but to those who have to learn the fellowship of suffering, understand something more of conformity to His death. The fruit of the Spirit is brought forth according to its season; and if the call is for meekness, patience, and long-suffering, it may be borne with love, from which parent root it springs: but He has not asked for joy; grieve not that you cannot give it. Suffer his will; in this there is rich compensation; for those that wait on Him shall not be ashamed (Rev. ii. 3; Matt. xii. 50).

SCRIPTURAL FELLOWSHIP.

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“And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”—Acts ii. 42.
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METHODISM is the revival of primitive Christianity. There are four essentials to the organization of a Christian Church. The recognition of the word of God, or the “Apostles doctrine” and preaching; “class-meetings,” or “fellowship;” sacraments, or “breaking of bread,” and prayer. It is a trite saying, man is a social being. Religion does not destroy or ignore this fact. Perhaps there never was a period in the history of the world when the principle of mutual dependence was so fully recognized as at the present day. Men who have a common interest at stake, who desire to promote a special object, and who feel that united they may profit by one another’s counsels, band themselves together, and appoint their semi-weekly, or weekly, or monthly meetings; when together, unitedly, they assemble at a given place to converse with one another, and plan how they may best succeed in accomplishing the special object for which they exist as a society or organization. It is easy to see the wisdom and design of all this. Will Christians, then, allow political parties, scientific societies, or literary associations to reap advantages from mutual and regular fellowship, while they cultivate no disposition to meet together for the special and definite purpose of promoting and extending the cause of Christ, and helping one another on in the way to heaven? It will not be regarded as an answer to all this to say, that Christians do thus meet together when they assemble for public worship on the Lord’s day, for this is far removed from the idea of “fellowship.” Our public congregations are promiscuous gatherings, where the scriptural idea of “fellowship” is not attempted for obvious reasons. Christians must meet “together” a select gathering, they must be separated from the world, and thus continue in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship.

Are “class-meetings” an invention of the Church, or a divinely appointed means of grace? Such meetings are constantly alluded to, and distinctly recommended in the Holy Scriptures. We must not be led astray by a name. “Fellowship” meetings would convey a better idea to a stranger, concerning the nature and character of such a means of grace as Methodists designate “class-meetings.” “Fellowship,”—“companionship, mutual association, familiar intercourse, communion,” thus Webster defines the meaning of this word. Now the question is not, Do the Scriptures authorize what is technically called a “class-meeting?” but, Do the Scriptures authorize Christians to come out from the world, to meet “together” as Christians, and when thus met together, in this special select gathering, to “pray” for one another, to “edify” one another, to “admonish” and “exhort” one another, and to “confess” their “faults one to another.”

Such is the language of the Bible, and no language could better describe a Methodist "class-meeting." It may be said that Christians can reprove and admonish, and edify one another, without meeting together for that special purpose. Suppose that possible, yet even then Christians would not have discharged their duty to one another; they *must* assemble for this *special purpose*, they are to "comfort" themselves "*together*," and they are to continue in this "fellowship" without wavering. We therefore conclude that the Holy Scriptures not only sanction, but authorize the assembling together of Christians for fellowship and mutual spiritual improvement; and, to use the technical language of Methodism, "class-meetings" are not peculiar to Methodism, but an institution of Christianity, and authorized by the word of God.

Such meetings promote self-examination. For the time being, worldly topics and secular business are forgotten, and the mind is concentrated upon one's own religious life and character. Is it not true that one reason why so many professing Christians are no credit to Christianity, arises from the fact that they so seldom sit in judgment upon their life and conduct—they think and speak but little concerning their spiritual emotions and desires? If they have any religious life or experience, they suppress any emotion in reference to it, and always avoid alluding to it in conversation. Such a course would destroy all earthly friendship. What is there that will grow, and hasten to maturity, without oversight and care, and faithful watching? Is the inner life of the soul, an unconscious development of man's spiritual powers, independent of his own co-operation and labor? If not, then what can. What diligence, what circumspection, are demanded on our part to promote the spiritual health of the soul. Surely an hour once a week, when Christians may meet to examine their own hearts, and mutually assist one another in understanding what duties and obligations rest upon them, is not too much time to devote to this special and important work.

Such meetings encourage weak and timid Christians. This is an argument which can only be appreciated by those who know something of the conflicts and temptations that assail the true Christian as he endeavors to save his soul. Are not young converts "babes" in Christ? How suggestive such a term is of weakness and dependence! To require the pastor of a Church to bear all the responsibility and care of the Church, is simply to demand an impossibility. Besides, is the rich experience of aged Christians, who have passed through many a conflict, and who are not ignorant of Satan's devices, of no value to the Church? How, then, may such experience be utilized for the benefit of younger Christians? When men are surrounded by difficulties and assailed by countless adversaries, they need something better than splendid theories to comfort them. Let them hear the sound of familiar voices, speaking words of cheer; let them see the foot-prints of travellers who have scaled the heights and braved the dangers that now lie in their pathway, and they will urge on with a courage which is the sure precursor of success.

Such meetings develop sympathy and brotherly love. A great effort is being made in our day to promote the union of Christians in Churches. So

far as this is brought about by "socials" and similar gatherings, a good work is accomplished. But let us not forget that union amongst Christians, to be worth anything to the Church, must rest upon the solid basis of spiritual and religious life. Fellowship promotes union, excites sympathy, and develops brotherly love. We may illustrate by calling attention to a number of passengers on board a steamer. In the majority of cases they never met before, though they may have resided in the same city, and possibly worshipped in the same congregation. For eight or ten days they are "together" in "fellowship," they converse freely, gradually unfold each other's history and plans, acquaintanceship ripens into friendship—not a transient gush of feeling, but a life-long attachment which nothing can sever; and when it is announced, "land ahead," there are many who regret that their fellowship must close for the present, to be renewed, if possible, hereafter. Then comes the shaking of hands, not the formal leave-taking which fashionable etiquette prescribes, but the genuine grasp of friends who would remain together if possible. Suppose those passengers on embarking at Portland, or New York, or Quebec, were quietly to pass into their own cabins, and direct the steward to furnish them with their meals, while they studiously avoided conversing with one another, how much of the spirit of love or friendship would be evoked? How many would even deem it necessary to give a "good-bye" bow, as a slight token of recognition when they parted at Londonderry or Liverpool? How many of them would desire to meet again? And yet there are some who would have us travel to heaven, so far as our religious experience is concerned, locked up in our own state-rooms, and preserving a dignified silence concerning our spiritual interests and welfare. Christians must have fellowship as Christians; their religious nature demands it, and if that demand is denied, they will be religiously un-social, and those valuable qualities in their character which depend for their full development upon mutual fellowship and conversation will be found wanting. The economy of Methodism provides for this fellowship and spiritual intercourse by arranging her members in "classes." Let us continue in this "fellowship," recommended and authorized by the Apostles, and which the history of Methodism has proved to be the conservatory of religious life and spiritual power.

ALEX. LANGFORD.

PULPIT TALK.—No. I.

CHRISTIAN JOY.



T. PAUL said to the Church at Thessalonica, "Rejoice evermore." Ten years later he wrote to the Church at Philippi, "Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say, rejoice." Without much difficulty we may fancy certain weak and sickly members of the Thessalonian and Philippian Churches, after reading these sentences over once, hesitate a moment, and then read them over

again. We may fancy that we hear them saying one to another, "Does Paul mean exactly what he says; does he mean that we are to rejoice when our enemies imprison us and spoil our goods, when affliction fills our flesh with pain and our families with fear, when we are beset with temptation and struggling with fiery trial, when cold and iron death diminishes the circle that lies the warmest to our hearts—does he mean that we are to rejoice then?" "I would," says one, "that I could always rejoice, when the road is smooth and the sky clear, to say nothing about doing so when the one is rough and the other stormy." "I would," says another, "that I could rejoice half my time, to say nothing about rejoicing evermore." "Upon the whole," says another, "I have begun to think that a quiet sorrowfulness of spirit is the best and safest for me; my rejoicing moments, which are very seldom, are always the forerunners of something unpleasant." "Most likely," interposes another, "Paul has given us a mark to aim at, more than a rule to walk by. Rejoice evermore, indeed! I wonder who does it."

Are we wrong in supposing that these Thessalonian and Philippian weak and feeble ones have their counterparts at the present day? Are we wrong in supposing that there are some now living who have as little real sympathy with the Apostolic injunction as we have fancied these primitive professors to possess? We fear that we are not wrong. We would that we were. We have the impression that there are some whose rejoicing moments are like angels' visits, "few and far between;" and others who regard unbroken joy, neither as a vale to walk by, nor a mark to aim at.

And yet nothing in the Bible is more evident than the duty and privilege of rejoicing "evermore." Unusual as it may be, and difficult of attainment as it may seem, yet there it is. The divine and majestic trees of faith, and love, and hope, are not more palpable in the fruitage of the spirit, than the beautifully attractive one of Christian joy. Love itself does not possess a more odorous foliage, a richer produce, or a more perennial freshness than does the slighted tree of abiding joy in the Holy Ghost.

Not long ago we ran over most of the passages in the Bible in which Christian joy is either enforced or embodied, and the surprise was great at their number and significance. "Blessed" or happy "are the people that know the joyful sound." "Oil of joy for mourning, garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." "God giveth to a man that is good in his sight, wisdom, and knowledge, and joy." "The fruit of the spirit is love, joy," &c. "The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," and so on through the long drawn aisles of the Divinely inspired Cathedral, did these bells of music ring their joyous and holy changes, and the wonder was that we had never heard them so distinctly before.

What then may we suppose to be the reason why Christian joy is not more generally felt?

1. Unquestionably one reason is a *doubtful experience*. Some professors of religion live in a region of perpetual uncertainty. If there is a tract of country between the city of Destruction and the city of the New Jerusalem, a very contrast to the land of Beulah, that is where they sojourn. The

atmosphere round about them is always cold, and heavy, and chilling, and misty. No birds of Paradise flash and sing about them, no beautiful flowers enamel and perfume their footsteps, no shining ones talk with them, no sunbeams play about them; the city of gold, and pearls, and precious stones never glimmers in the distance; on the contrary, the turrets of Doubting Castle loom through the mist, and its gloomy portcullis grates on the ear as every now and then Giant Despair walks in and out. The pilgrims that travel in this unhappy territory are gloomy and anxious. They wander about, and they scarcely know whether they are going forward or backward, heavenward or earthward.

Evidently Christian joy cannot live in such an atmosphere as this. The cold shivering mists of doubt suffocate it in a moment. Christian joy means a consciousness of sin forgiven, an inward peace and satisfaction arising from reconciliation with God—it means fellowship with Jesus and a good hope of heaven. O ye Christian doubters! joy cannot be yours until you get into a sunnier and more flowery region.

2. The prevalence of *feeble experience* may be assigned as another reason. A condition not so much one of doubt, as one of infancy. Religion lives in Christians of this class, but it only *just lives*. Faith and hope, and love and joy are there, but that is all. They may be seen as the light of the glow worm, but not felt as the light of the sun. Religion lives on sufferance. It is a subordinate, not a controlling principle. Christ is in the lowest room, the world in the highest and best.

3. Christian joy is not unfrequently stunted in its growth by a *defective theology*. Some good people are almost as much afraid of joy as they are of sin. They think that darkness is much more profitable to the soul than light. That the work of God in the heart is much more surely carried on during a state of inward suffering. That anguish, and pain, and distress are far more beneficial to the soul than joy. Christians are said to be in far greater peril in a season of religious enjoyment, than in a time of general barrenness; and they illustrate their doctrine with the prudential remark, that the Tempter suffers a vessel with a worthless cargo to pass unnoticed, but that he bears down on a richly-freighted prize ship. "O," say they most monitorially, "take care of your joys; you are safe enough in your sorrows. Cloudy weather is the surest sailing for the Christian."

We have for some time had the conviction that a man's intelligence is the measure of his experience, that the measure of his religious enjoyment is determined by his belief, and that the level of the one will, in all ordinary cases, be that of the other. He whose views of the Spirit's witness are confused, will have on the same vital point a confusion of experience; and he who looks upon Christian joy as a dangerous thing, will not be overstocked with that precious fruit of the Spirit.

But where do the Scriptures represent Christian joy as a dangerous emotion? No where. On the contrary, it is the subject of unvarying eulogy and command. "The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, and,"—— What? Cloud and shadow? No. "Joy in the Holy Ghost." "The joy of the Lord

is,"— What ? The essence of insecurity and peril ? No. "The joy of the Lord is your *strength*." O these defective, one-sided views of Bible truth : what a poor, weak thing they sometimes make of a man !

Wesley says that "a clear communion with the Father and the Son will do more in an hour in promoting the growth of piety, than the absence of it will do in an age." Let not the Christian mariner sail to heaven as if he had death's head and cross-bones on his flag ; let him not carry ballast or freight in order that Satan may have no temptation to board him. Rather let him, if the imagery may be allowed, clothe his crew with the panoply of the cross, load his guns to the muzzle with faith and prayer, freight his vessel to the bulwarks with the costly merchandise of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, nail his colors to the mast head, carefully watch and boldly defy his most malignant adversary, and, as he breasts the waves of life, let him sing as he sails,—

" Onward I haste, To the heavenly feast,
That, that is the fulness : but this is the taste !
And this I shall prove, Till with joy I remove,
To the heaven of heavens in Jesus' love."

—H. F. BLAND.

THE CRUCIFIXION.

A MEDITATION FOR GOOD FRIDAY.



HE crucifixion of Christ is the all-absorbing question of the world's history. The theatre of its operation is the church in the wilderness. Its final results in the song of the redeemed of every nation in heaven. Its grand design presents a subject of the highest and most inspiring contemplation, both to angels and men. If the hope of man was at a very early period directed to a Deliverer, far distant in the events of time, it was natural to conclude that some distinguishing marks should be afforded by which he might be known. This was the great intent of prophecy and type. They were portraits of his character, indications of his conduct, prefigurations of the circumstances by which his advent might be ascertained. So vast and costly a ritual could not have been set up, and worked with such minute precision for so long a period, for no purpose. They had a grand centre somewhere, to which all were tending, and were designed to accomplish a purpose worthy themselves and their great Author ; and whether we admire their grandeur, or are dazzled with their splendor, as they guide the faith of patriarchs, kings, prophets, and righteous men in all ages, they all converge toward one focus,—they gather around the person and cross of Christ. They irradiate, as with a crown of glory, the head which was once crowned with thorns ; they descend upon the sacrifice, and demonstrate that Jesus, the crucified, was the Lamb slain—in the intention of God—from the foundation of the world.

Respecting the character of the crucifixion important diversities of opinion have long existed, swaying their influence, either for better or worse, over the principles and actions of men, according to the nature and measure of the faith they may have received. The Jews regarded him as making criminal assumptions to the Godhead, for which—according to their law—he ought to die; he is therefore classed by them as a criminal. The Socinians, differing from the Jews, regard Christ as a man of heroic virtue, who sealed his doctrine with his blood; he was, therefore, in their judgment a martyr. While the Christian believes him to be a divinely-appointed Saviour, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins; his death is therefore regarded by the Christian as a sacrifice. When Jesus was arraigned for trial before the Jewish council, it was upon the charge of blasphemy (Matt. vi. 57-66).* In support of this charge the Chief Priests and Elders sought false witnesses, probably from among the bystanders, and by offering bribes; but as their law required, in capital cases, that two or three witnesses should agree in their testimony, they found none,—there were many willing, but none who said what was to their purpose. When Christ acknowledged his own claims to the Messiahship, and that He was the Son of God (Luke xxii. 67-71), the High Priest said they had no need of witnesses, for *they* had heard him speak blasphemy, and the sentence of the court was, "He is guilty of death." In all civil cases the power of life and death had been taken from the Jewish courts by the Romans, but in matters of religion they still held the power to inflict capital punishment, such sentences being confirmed by the Roman courts before execution. The proper punishment of a blasphemer by their law was stoning, but the Jewish council were anxious to have our Lord crucified, which was a Roman punishment; they therefore applied to Pilate for confirmation of the sentence. They also wished Pilate to treat him as an enemy to Caesar, and a seditious opposer to the Roman Government, in order that the Roman soldiers might have the charge of the crucifixion; the motive probably being lest the populace who favored him, on seeing him brought out to be stoned, might attempt to rescue him, which they dared not do when the Roman garrison were there under arms to carry the whole into effect.

It may very properly be asked here, What was the crime for which our Lord was crucified? It could not have been simply for professing to be the Messiah, for against such profession there was no law, and as a people they had been anxiously waiting, from generation to generation, for the appearance of Messiah. Nor was it for making such professions, and failing to prove them, for no proof was demanded, no trial of his claims established; but because he said, "I am the Christ," and having previously professed to be the Son of God. This, then, was the alleged blasphemy for which our Lord was sentenced to death, by the Jewish council, and by the perjured witnesses.

When he was charged with claiming to be the King of the Jews—the object being to implicate him in seditious intentions (Luke xxiii. 1-5)—Jesus, without hesitation, declared that he was, but takes care that Pilate should not proceed in ignorance upon their malicious suggestion. He intimates to Pilate

* The reader will do well to consult the references.

that he knew the authors of the charge, by asking: "Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?" He explains the meaning of his professing to be the King of the Jews, that he was not so politically,—it was not a civil but a spiritual reign: "My kingdom is not of this world," therefore Caesar had nothing to fear from Him (John xviii. 33). Pilate saw there was something mysterious in his kingdom which he did not comprehend, but that there was nothing seditious, neither in his conduct or intentions; therefore Pilate said to his accusers, "I find no fault in this man." They were so enraged and vociferous at this that Pilate sent him to Herod, Tetrarch of Galilee, who was then in Jerusalem (Luke xxiii. 7),—the chief priests and scribes followed, and vehemently accused him.

Herod, with his soldiers, set all his claims to royalty at nought, and made sport of him by arraying him in a cast-off suit of royalty, then sent him back to Pilate, who, when he had called the council together, declared the charge of disloyalty not sustained, neither before Herod nor in his own court; he would therefore chastise him and let him go. But the clamors of the multitude, instigated and led on by the chief priests and elders (Matt. xxvii. 20), demanded that he should be crucified,—and with such outrage they prevailed (Luke xxiii. 13),—thus openly declaring they had no regard to law or justice. This was evident to Pilate, who knew that for envy—or a strong malevolent feeling, occasioned by his surpassing excellence—they had delivered him, and which explains his reluctance to deliver him to their wishes (Mark xv. 1). After they had secured this very extraordinary sentence against him, another outrage upon his benignity and tenderness was committed, in exhibiting him a second time to the public gaze and laughter in a garb of mock royalty (Matt. xxvii. 27). They did not turn his claim to be the Messiah into mockery, but as a state prisoner, condemned for aspiring to the sovereignty in opposition to Caesar. What a strange anomaly is presented in these pretensions to law and order! It is now evident that our Lord was executed by the Romans on one charge, and by the Jews on another: that by the Romans was, that he claimed to be the King of the Jews; that by the Sanhedrim, because he said, "I am the Son of God." Nor can there be a stronger proof of the utterly unjust treatment suffered by the Lord Jesus from His judges, than that He was condemned for one crime, and executed for another,—that is, he was not executed for the crime for which he was tried, nor tried on the charge for which he was executed.

There are several prominent persons and circumstances connected with this event to which attention may be briefly directed. The first is Pilate, a double-minded, yet weak-minded man. He had two ends to serve, but gained neither; he wished to save the life of Christ, and please the Jews; he found no fault in Christ, yet wished to chastise him, then release him; he pronounces him just, yet, to pacify the Jews, would scourge him; he tries to save Christ, but to gain popular favor and do right he could not,—right must yield to self, and Christ, though innocent, he delivered up to be crucified. Poor Pilate! he tried to do what no man ever has done, nor can do, to make a successful compromise between right and wrong. Is not this a fearful practice of everyday life? How often are honor and truth compromised for the sake of a little

paltry gain,—God and truth for the sake of a little friendship with the world. Judas, one of his active apostles, but who had unworthily and basely betrayed and sold Christ, makes a public declaration that he had betrayed innocent blood (Matt. xxvii. 3). Pilate's wife calls Christ a just man, in her message to her lord (Matt. xxvii. 19). Pilate himself washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am clear of the blood of this just man." Herod, though he derides him, finds no fault in him. The very multitude who clamoured for his blood, smote upon their breasts, feeling that the guilt was not his, but theirs; and the very accusation emblazoned upon his cross was not a charge of crime, but a publication of his official right and majesty: "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews." The external prodigies which took place at his death are clear indications that some extraordinary power was at work to effect such extraordinary phenomena. That these prodigies were supernatural is sufficiently manifest. Had it been the sun darkened only, or the earthquake only, these might have been thought coincidences,—singular, it is true, yet accidental. But the rending of the vail of the temple from the top to the bottom, and that by an invisible hand, the rending rocks and opening graves,—and, after his resurrection, the rising dead,—taken together, it is evident it is an interposition of God himself, declaring that his hand is in it; and they who asked a sign from heaven, now had it both from heaven and earth, and even from the sacred temple,—indeed, nature appears full of them. Christ, our Forerunner, was passing through the vail into the holy of holies, there to appear in the presence of God for us.

The Scripture account of these facts is, that they were determined by the counsel of God beforehand to be done (Acts iv. 27), therefore some persons have concluded that the Jews were necessary agents in their being so fulfilled, and that if not by the power of God directly, yet by a train of circumstances so arranged by him that it was impossible for them to escape. That it was God's eternal purpose that his Son should die, no one who believes the Scriptures will dispute; but that it was any part of God's original intention that the murderers of Christ should perpetrate that deed of blood, or that he imposed upon them the necessity thus openly to violate his own law, we deny. Their conduct in the matter involved a criminal inattention to their own Scriptures, and to the signs of the times in which they lived. They wilfully shut their eyes against the light of the clearest evidence as to his real character, with its seals of miracles and teaching. To suppose that an infinitely pure and holy God, whose hatred to sin is unbounded, and whose wrath is revealed from heaven against it, would yet impel his creatures to commit it, is a foul aspersion upon his character and government. Of the wickedness of their conduct many of them became fully convinced, and, in a state of mingled sorrow and dread, cried, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

It has also been stated that if the Jews and Romans living in our Lord's time had been believers in Jesus, and had forbore to lay violent hands upon him, the Divine purpose, in the Redemption of Man, must have failed, and the world have perished. Such apprehensions arise from very contracted views of the Divine counsels. He is perfectly independent of all human

agency. If he does not need man's work in the accomplishment of his purposes, he certainly does not need man's wickedness for any such purpose. It might be easy to suggest other methods by which the death of Christ might have been effected; but it is useless to speculate. His death has been accomplished, and that stupendous event will never be repeated. Death hath no more dominion over him.

It has also been said that the prophecies of the Old Testament imposed a necessity upon the Jews to put Christ to death (Acts ii. 23, and iii. 13, and iv. 27). Prophecy in this case was simply an expression of God's foreknowledge. Had the conduct of the Jewish and Roman authorities towards Christ been friendly, as it ought to have been, the Divine mind would have seen it to be such, and his plans (so to speak) formed accordingly. Simple foreknowledge no more influences a fact than afterknowledge, and the actions of a moral agent are no more determined by a mere prediction than they are by history. It is well known that their obduracy and perverseness was purely their own, and that for their voluntary wickedness and hatred to Christ, God left them to fill up the measure of their iniquities by the perpetration of a crime which has no parallel in the records of guilt and infamy.

For what Christ has done, the Father hath declared himself well pleased; and hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name (Phil. ii. 6); whereas, the Jews were held in the utmost contempt,—God defeating their presumptuous and evil designs. He that sitteth in the heavens laughed at them, and held them in derision, (Ps. ii. 2-6). He spoke to them afterwards, not in strains of love and tenderness, but in his wrath, and vexed them in his sore displeasure. Judgment ceased to slumber, but awoke in all its terrible severity upon them as a people and nation, until their magnificent temple was destroyed, and one stone was not left upon another in the walls of their ancient and honored city. Christ himself wept at the prospect of their calamities. The predictions concerning them were remarkable; and the calamities that came upon them, the greatest the world ever saw. It is hardly possible to consider the nature and extent of their sufferings, and not to conclude their own imprecations to be singularly fulfilled upon them,—“His blood be upon us and our children” (Matt. xxvii. or 25), that which the Scriptures assign (1 Thess. ii. 15).

The end of Christ's death was our personal salvation. Our Christian profession, while we remain in friendship with the world, and under the power of sin, is a standing mockery of the majesty of the very religion of which we bear the name. Pardon through his blood is ours if we seek it, but if not, we only crucify the Son of God afresh (Heb. x. 26). Let us take care of being Pilate-like. His attempts to release Jesus were all dissipated by a shout from the multitude,—“If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend.” He bought the friendship of Herod and of Caesar at the price of the blood of Christ. How often since then has the same friendship been bought at the same price by us? An open shame, perhaps, in the history of us all.

MINIMUS.

DID WESLEY PROFESS SANCTIFICATION?



OME say no. They declare they can nowhere find in his writings a distinct profession of the blessing. Surely these must be persons who never *can* see anything unless it ends in *ation*: Justification—sanctification—glorification. Certainly if Mr. Wesley did not profess the blessing in his writings just in these very words, he wrote enough to show that he possessed the *thing itself*. Let any one who doubts this read the following from his "Character of a Methodist,"—and without controversy he professed to be a Methodist—and they will be convinced that what Mr. Wesley taught in regard to Christian experience, he also enjoyed. Our ministerial brethren, and those who have Wesley's works in their libraries, and have *read* them, will please excuse us for occupying several pages with the following extract. We are persuaded it will do anyone good to read it, while to not a few it will come with all the freshness of a new revelation:

"What then is the mark? Who is a Methodist, according to your own account?" I answer: A Methodist is one who has "the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him;" one who "loves the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind, and with all his strength." God is the joy of his heart, and the desire of his soul; which is constantly crying out, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee! My God and my all! Thou art the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever!"

He is therefore happy in God, yea, always happy, as having in him "a well of water springing up into everlasting life," and overflowing his soul with peace and joy. "Perfect love" having now "cast out fear," he "rejoices evermore." He "rejoices in the Lord always," even "in God his Saviour;" and in the Father, "through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom he hath now received the atonement." "Having" found "redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of his sins," he cannot but rejoice, whenever he looks back on the horrible pit out of which he is delivered; when he sees "all his transgressions blotted out as a cloud, and his iniquities as a thick cloud." He cannot but rejoice, whenever he looks on the state wherein he now is; "being justified freely, and having peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." For "he that believeth, hath the witness" of this "in himself;" being now the son of God by faith. "Because he is a son, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into his heart, crying, Abba, Father!" And "the Spirit itself beareth witness with his spirit, that he is a child of God." He rejoiceth also, whenever he looks forward, "in hope of the glory that shall be revealed;" yea, this his joy is full, and all his bones cry out, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten me again to a living hope—of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for me!"

"And he who hath this hope, thus "full of immortality, in every thing giveth thanks;" as knowing that this (whatsoever it is) "is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning him." From him, therefore, he cheerfully receives all, saying, "Good is the will of the Lord;" and whether the Lord giveth or taketh away, equally "blessing the name of the Lord." For he hath "learned, in whatsoever state he is, therewith to be content." He knoweth "both how to be abased, and how to abound. Everywhere and in all things he is instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and suffer need." Whether in ease or pain, whether in sickness or health, whether in life or death, he giveth thanks from the ground of his heart to Him who orders it for good; knowing that as "every good gift cometh from above," so none but good can come from the Father of lights, into whose hand he has wholly committed his body and soul, as into the hands of a faithful Creator. He is therefore "careful" (anxiously or uneasily) "for nothing;" as having "cast all his care on

Him that careth for him," and "in all things" resting on him, after "making his request known to him with thanksgiving."

For indeed he "prays without ceasing." It is given him "always to pray, and not to faint." Not that he is always in the house of prayer; though he neglects no opportunity of being there. Neither is he always on his knees, although he often is, or on his face, before the Lord his God. Nor yet is he always crying aloud to God, or calling upon him in words: for many times "the Spirit maketh intercession for him with groans that cannot be uttered." But at all times the language of his heart is this: "Thou brightness of the eternal glory, unto thee is my heart, though without a voice, and my silence speaketh unto thee." And this is true prayer, and this alone. But his heart is ever lifted up to God, at all times and in all places. In retirement or company, in leisure, business, or conversation, his heart is ever with the Lord. Whether he lie down or rise up, God is in all his thoughts; he walks with God continually, having the loving eye of his mind still fixed upon him, and everywhere "seeing him that is invisible."

And while he thus always exercises his love to God, by praying without ceasing, rejoicing evermore, and in everything giving thanks, this commandment is written in his heart, "That he who loveth God, love his brother also." And he accordingly loves his neighbour as himself; he loves every man as his own soul. His heart is full of love to all mankind, to every child of "the Father of the spirits of all flesh." That a man is not personally known to him, is no bar to his love; no, nor that he is known to be such as he approves not, that he repays hatred for his good will. For he "loves his enemies;" yea, and the enemies of God, "the evil and the unthankful." And if it be not in his power to "do good to them that hate him," yet he ceases not to pray for them, though they continue to spurn his love, and still "despitefully use him and persecute him."

For he is "pure in heart." The love of God has purified his heart from all revengeful passions, from envy, malice, and wrath. from every unkind temper or malign affection. It hath cleansed him from pride and haughtiness of spirit, whereof alone cometh contention. And he hath now "put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long suffering;" so that he "forbears and forgives, if he had a quarrel against any; even as God in Christ hath forgiven him." And indeed all possible ground for contention, on his part, is utterly cut off. For none can take from him what he desires; seeing he "loves not the world, nor" any of "the things of the world;" being now "crucified to the world, and the world crucified to him;" being dead to all that is in the world, both to "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life." For "all his desire is unto God, and to the remembrance of his name."

Agreeable to this his one desire, is the one design of his life, namely, "not to do his own will, but the will of Him that sent him." His one intention at all times and in all things is, not to please himself, but Him whom his soul loveth. He has a single eye. And because "his eye is single, his whole body is full of light." Indeed, where the loving eye of the soul is continually fixed upon God, there can be no darkness at all, "but the whole is light; as when the bright shining of a candle doth enlighten the house." God then reigns alone. All that is in the soul is holiness to the Lord. There is not a motion in his heart, but is according to his will. Every thought that arises points to Him, and is in obedience to the law of Christ.

And the tree is known by its fruits. For as he loves God, so he keeps his commandments; not only some, or most of them, but all, from the least to the greatest. He is not content to "keep the whole law, and offend in one point;" but has in all points, "a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man." Whatever God has forbidden, he avoids; whatever God hath enjoined, he doeth; and that whether it be little or great, hard or easy, joyous or grievous to the flesh. He "runs the way of God's commandments," now he hath set his heart at liberty. It is his glory so to do; it is his daily crown of rejoicing, "to do the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven;" knowing it is the highest privilege of "the angels of God, of those that excel in strength, to fulfil his commandments, and hearken to the voice of his word."

All the commandments of God he accordingly keeps, and that with all his might. For his obedience is in proportion to his love, the source from whence it flows. And therefore, loving God with all his heart, he serves him with all his strength. He continually presents his soul and body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God; entirely and without reserve devoting himself, all he has, and all he is, to his glory. All the talents he has received, he constantly employs according to his Master's will; every power and faculty of his soul, every member of his body. Once he "yielded" them "unto sin" and the devil, "as instruments of unrighteousness;" but now, "being alive from the dead, he yields" them all "as instruments of righteousness unto God."

By consequence, whatsoever he doeth, it is all to the glory of God. In all his employments of every kind, he not only aims at this, (which is implied in having a single eye), but actually attains it. His business and refreshments, as well as his prayers, all serve this great end. Whether he sit in his house or walk by the way, whether he lie down or rise up, he is promoting, in all he speaks or does, the one business of his life; whether he put on his apparel, or labor, or eat and drink, or divert himself from too wasting labor, it all tends to advance the glory of God, by peace and good will among men. His one invariable rule is this, "Whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

Nor do the customs of the world at all hinder his "running the race that is set before him." He knows that vice does not lose its nature, though it becomes ever so fashionable; and remembers, that "every man is to give an account of himself to God." He cannot, therefore, "follow" even "a multitude to do evil." He cannot "fare sumptuously every day," or "make provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof." He cannot "lay up treasures upon earth," any more than he can take fire into his bosom. He cannot "adorn himself," on any pretence, "with gold or costly apparel." He cannot join in or countenance any diversion which has the least tendency to vice of any kind. He cannot "speak evil" of his neighbor, any more than he can lie either for God or man. He cannot utter an unkind word of any one; for love keeps the door of his lips. He cannot speak "idle words;" "no corrupt communication" ever "comes out of his mouth," as is all that "which is" not "good to the use of edifying," not "fit to minister grace to the hearers." But "whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are" justly "of good report," he thinks and speaks, and acts, "adorning the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in all things.

Lastly. As he has time, he "does good unto all men;" unto neighbors and strangers, friends and enemies: and that in every possible kind; not only to their bodies by "feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting those that are sick or in prison;" but much more does he labor to do good to their souls, as of the ability which God giveth to awaken those that sleep in death; to bring those who are awakend to the atoning blood, that, "being justified by faith, they may have peace with God;" and to provoke those who have peace with God to abound more in love and in good works. And he is willing to "spend and be spent herein," even "to be offered up on the sacrifice and service of their faith," so they may "all come unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

These are the principles and practices of our sect; these are the marks of a true Methodist. By these alone do those who are in derision so called, desire to be distinguished from other men. If any man say, "Why, these are only the common, fundamental principles of Christianity!" Thou hast said; so I mean; this is the very truth; I know they are no other; and I would to God both thou and all men knew, that I, and all who follow my judgment, do vehemently refuse to be distinguished from other men, by any but the common principles of Christianity, — the plain, old Christianity that I teach, renouncing and detesting all other marks of distinction. And whosoever is what I preach, (let him be called what he will, for names change not the nature of things,) he is a Christian, not in name only, but in heart and in life. He is inwardly and outwardly conformed to the will of God, as revealed in the written word. He thinks, speaks, and lives, according to the method laid down in the revelation of Jesus Christ. His soul is renewed after the

image of God, in righteousness and in true holiness. And having the mind that was in Christ, he so walks as Christ also walked.

By these marks, by these fruits of a living faith, do we labor to distinguish ourselves from the unbelieving world, from all those whose minds or lives are not according to the Gospel of Christ. But from real Christians, of whatsoever denomination they be, we earnestly desire not to be distinguished at all; not from any who sincerely follow after what they know they have not yet attained. No: "Whosoever doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." And I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that we be in no wise divided among ourselves. Is thy heart right, as my heart is with thine? I ask no further question. If it be, give me thy hand. For opinions or terms, let us not destroy the work of God. Dost thou love and serve God? It is enough. I give thee the right hand of fellowship. If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies; let us strive together for the faith of the Gospel; walking worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called; with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace; remembering, there is one body, and one Spirit, even as we are called with one hope of our calling; "one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

HOW TO PROMOTE SPIRITUAL LIFE.

BY A CONGREGATIONAL MINISTER.



O promote spiritual life is that for which the Christian minister lives, and if he fail to do this, then is his labor in vain. It will be admitted that spiritual life amongst us is at a low ebb, and it is to be feared that as churches we are losing our power. If it be so, it is well to look at the matter calmly, prayerfully, earnestly, and ask, What can be done? To this question we are anxious to find an answer to-day. But first it may be well to ask another question, viz., Upon whom rests the responsibility? I answer, Upon all who are in any way connected with Christ's Church. No doubt the pastor, as the leader, friend, guide, and teacher of the Church, is largely responsible, and where spiritual life is low, doubtless he is often much to blame; but surely others are scarcely less responsible, and with them, as with him, the remedy may be found.

"Let the bishop be blameless as the steward of God, not self-willed, not soon angry; let him hold fast the faithful Word as he hath been taught. Let the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, holding the faith in a pure conscience," using their office as in the sight of God; let pastor and deacons, as the leaders of our church life, set before the people a high standard of holy, Christian living, and much will be done to diminish the evil we now deplore.

What we want amongst us is *more of the spirit of love*, which is the spirit of Christ. "Charity suffereth long, and is kind, thinketh no evil, beareth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things; charity never faileth." Oh for more of that spirit which, while it never excuses the sins of men, makes us very tender in dealing with their failings; let us seek more of the spirit of

Christ in our own hearts, let us as ministers and people resolve to take Him as our example in all things, and spiritual life will flourish first in our own souls, and then by our influence in the souls of others.

Jesus said, "*My kingdom is not of this world*;" it is to be feared we sometimes forget this, and herein lies the secret of much that we now deplore. We work hard, we are most active, we set going all kinds of religious machinery, and yet how few comparatively are the results. We fight the Lord's battles; are not the weapons of our warfare sometimes carnal? We speak many words; do we always set forth the Word of Life? We endeavor to set on fire men's hearts; do we not sometimes forget to seek the fire from off the altar, without which we had better be dumb? Christ's servants must be spiritual, and they must use spiritual means, or there cannot be spiritual results. Our Lord called His people "The salt of the earth," "The light of the world," "A city set upon a hill." If the salt lose its savour, it is good for nothing; if the mists and fogs of earth obscure the city, its beauty and glory cannot be seen. The Church has been compared to the moon receiving her light from the sun, and reflecting that light for the good of men; but if the earth come between, where is the light? There can be but little hope for the Church, and we dare not look for an increase of spiritual life, until our people—until we all—see our high calling of God, and are led to shake ourselves from the dust of earth, and live as the children of God, as the brethren of Christ, as the temples of the Holy Ghost. I dwell on this because it cannot be denied that the world holds us, alas! too fast, and in some quarters we see its spirit prevailing terribly in our midst.

Is there not reason to fear that many of our people are far too like the world? And, alas! is it not true that we, as ministers and deacons, sometimes forget our holy calling, and, instead of commending Christ and His religion to men in our lives, too often, by our light conversation and worldly bearing, hinder, rather than aid, the spiritual life in others. If these things are so, can we wonder if spiritual life in our churches does not flourish?

But in our inquiry, we do well to direct our attention to our public services, and we ask, Are they all we could wish? Is it not true that in them we see too little life and power? How seldom is there a warm, hearty keynote struck at the commencement, and sustained to the close of our service; and then how few of our people are really prepared for the blessing which ought to be sought and found in God's house? They often come weary, and, alas! how many come late; in many cases the service is half over before they settle down to enjoy it. If we could get our people to be in their places at least five minutes before the service commences, to wait prayerfully for the blessing they seek, what power would be realized!

We want in our public services more holy fire, more earnestness on the part of minister and people; we need more Divine unction; we need to realize more that we come to worship God, that we come to feel the presence of Christ, to seek the Spirit's aid, rather than to see and be seen, or to hear and criticise the sermon; and until our people do this, I do not expect to see a large increase of spiritual life.

We cannot over-estimate the importance of our *prayer-meetings*, and yet

do we not feel that they are sadly lacking in power? When Jesus said, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst," He first said, "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father, which is in heaven." We want more of that spirit in our prayer-meetings which animated the disciples, who, when they prayed, felt the place shake where they were assembled, and were filled with the Holy Ghost. Our prayer-meetings, I maintain, are not what they ought to be, what they might be, what they must be, before they are helpful in promoting the spiritual life of our churches.

Our *church meetings*, I believe, ought to be made more serviceable to us spiritually than they now are. In some quarters they are too often scenes of worldliness,—but need it be so? If business must be done, let it be as in the presence of Christ. Why do not Christians remember more that they live to promote *His* cause, to carry on *His* work—not their own. What anguish was in the heart of him who said long ago words that might be applied very widely now, "For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's," or of him who said, "I wrote unto the church, but Diotrefes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence, receiveth us not." In our church-meetings we ought to realize more than at any other time what is the true union and communion of the saints. Let us make the tone of our church-meetings more spiritual,—let us when we meet realize that we come together as members of Christ, to promote the welfare of His Church; let us assemble and remain together more in the spirit of prayer, and we remove a great hindrance to, and also supply a powerful means for, the promotion of the spiritual life. How often we sing—would that we felt and practised the truth more—

" Make us of one heart and mind,
 Courteous, pitiful, and kind;
 Lowly, meek, in thought and word,
 Altogether like our Lord.
 Let us each for other care,
 Each the other's burden bear;
 To Thy Church the pattern give,
 Show how true believers live."

The perfection of spiritual life consists in a *likeness to Christ*; and the nearer we get to Him, the more spiritual we become. There must be personal intimacy with Him; there must be walking with Him; I must be able to look to Him as my Friend. And as I mark the loveliness of His character, and listen to the music of His voice, or trace the beauty of His countenance, or feel the kindlings of his love, my heart will warm, the influence of His Spirit will mould mine, my soul will be knit to Him, and my life will be devoted to His service. Men will take knowledge of me; they will behold my works; they will be constrained to say I have *been with Jesus*. Oh that men who call themselves Christians did but realize what they owe to Christ! Then would the words we so often repeat have a meaning and a force, now, alas! often wanting, and we should seek to prove, what now too many *do not* prove, that they are sincere when they sing—

“ Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small ;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.”

As ministers of Christ, we must take the chief burden of responsibility upon ourselves in the endeavor to promote the spiritual life of our churches ; let us not shrink from it, but prayerfully and with fixed purpose give ourselves to the work. Much grace is needed, but all grace will be given if we seek it. We must urge upon our people the necessity of a *holy life*, and of separation from the world. We must remind them of Christ's words, “ Let him *deny himself*, and take up his cross daily, and *follow Me*.” We must impress upon them the importance of *prayer*, and the benefit of quiet meditation as in the presence of God. We must insist upon a closer acquaintance with the Word of God, reminding them of the words of the Psalmist and of Peter, “ Thy Word hath quickened me ; ” “ Desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby.” It is sad to think of the few who prayerfully read God's Word, even for ten minutes each day. We must by all means seek to *draw men to Christ* as the true centre of unity, reminding them that they with us are fellow-heirs with the saints, and are therefore citizens of heaven. Thus teaching, thus urging, in the spirit of prayer, in the spirit of love, in the spirit of our Master, I firmly believe spiritual life would increase.

As the leaders of our people, we may do much to promote the spiritual life of our churches by our *example*. The eyes of men are upon us, and they copy us more than we think, and our influence, direct and indirect, is felt more than we imagine. Would we see our people holy, prayerful, Christ-like, zealous ? Let us take care that we give them a copy worthy of imitation. “ Brethren,” said Paul, “ be ye followers of me.” Who of us dare say that always ? Our people will seldom reach a higher standard than we ourselves present ; if, therefore, our devotion and likeness to Christ be partial, and our conversation trifling, what can we expect our people to be ?

Need I say we must be *men of prayer*. Can we forget how our Master prayed—spending *whole nights* in prayer, or how Paul bore his people on his heart before God ? Can we forget the prayers of Luther, or how all successful men have been *praying men* ? “ I fear the prayers of John Knox more than ten thousand men,” said Mary Queen of Scots. We little know the power we wield when we pray. Are there not evil influences possessing the hearts of many of our people,—and, alas ! our own hearts too ? We know who holds the remedy ; let us apply to Him. Let us come like the disciples of old, when baffled and defeated by Satan ; and as we come to pray for ourselves and for our people, let us remember that all things are possible to him that believeth. I repeat, we must be men of prayer before we can hope to see an increase of spiritual life. Could we not have our prayer-union, and agree to pray for each other at a given hour at least once a week ? The thought would be helpful that we were asking for the same thing at one time ; and who can tell the blessing that might follow ?

“ More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of.
Wherefore let thy voice rise like a fountain for me night and day ;

For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer,
Both for themselves and those who call them Friend?"

In seeking an answer to our question, it may be further remarked that good, wholesome, spiritual food is essential to the maintenance of spiritual life; and unless this be given to our people, they will suffer spiritual death. It is cause for sorrow that, in many quarters, the people are not fed with food such as the Master blesses. Can we therefore wonder if we find little, if any, spiritual life? We want more of the old-fashioned, oft-abused Gospel. *It*, after all, is the power of God to the salvation of sinners, and the building up of saints. Our fathers loved it, lived upon it, and died in its defence. We want no new Gospel; we need not seek a Gospel in France, or Germany, or Rome; we already possess it, as Jesus gave it, as Paul preached it. Oh let us preach the Gospel in all its fulness, and the souls of our people will prosper and be in health.

Before we can hope to see spiritual life increase, we must give more prominence in our teaching to the work of the Holy Spirit. It is to be feared that many of us sadly fail in this respect; and yet do we not know that without the Spirit's aid all our efforts are vain? God the Holy Spirit is with us to-day. His office is to give life, to teach, to comfort, to guide into all truth. And if we have amongst us any blessing, if we see any life, if we have any power, if we can point to any success in our work for Christ, it is because the Spirit has blessed. Oh that we—that all our churches—might be baptized by the Holy Ghost! Then should we see a mighty revival, and spiritual life would prevail.

As ministers of Christ our course is plain; we are His ambassadors, and are sent to preach peace through his name. Let us be true to our commission. Men need the Gospel to-day as they ever have needed it. The world may change, but men's hearts, with their sins and sorrows, are the same as when Jesus said: "Come unto me, all ye that labor, and I will give you rest." We must deal with men as Christ did, and in His spirit, and to do this we must study *Christ*. How He loved and pitied men! How gentle were His words! How tender was His sympathy! How full of compassion was His look! How He won the erring back! How patient was He! How the poor sin-stricken ones were drawn to Him! They came to Him with their sins, and sorrows, and pains, and He turned none away. Jesus lived to bless, to do good; He died to save; and to-day He is the same. His love never alters; His power is almighty. He loves His church as He ever loved it, for He bought it with His blood; and precious to Him are the feeblest of His fold. Are we, the under-shepherds, concerned for the welfare of His Church? He more. Let us, then, go boldly to Him, for His we are. We need His aid, and He has promised to give it. Let us lay our burden at His feet, and ask that to us, ministers, deacons, people, may be given more life, more power, more of Himself, and the blessing shall be given; for it is ours to ask, it is His to give, and to Him shall be all the praise.—*The Christian*.

LIVE WHILE YOU LIVE.

IS not for man to trifle! Life is brief
And sin is here.
Our age is but the falling of a leaf—
A dropping tear.
We have no time to sport away the hours:
All must be earnest in a world like ours.

Not many lives, but only one have we—
Frail, fleeting man!
How sacred should that one life ever be—
That narrow span!
Day after day filled up with blessed toil;
Hour after hour still bringing in new spoil!

Our being is no shadow of thin air,
No vacant dream:
No fable of the things that never were,
But only seem.
'Tis full of meaning as of mystery,
Though strange and solemn may that meaning be.

Our sorrows are no phantoms of the night—
No idle tale:
No cloud that floats along a sky of light,
On summer gale.
They are the true realities of earth—
Friends and companions even from our birth.

O, life below, how brief, how poor, how sad!
One heavy sigh.
O, life above, how long, and fair, and glad!
An endless joy.
O! to have done for aye with dying here!
O! to begin the living in yon sphere!

O, day of time, how dark! O, sky and earth,
How dull your hue!
O, day of Christ, how bright! O, sky and earth,
Made fair and new!
Come, better Eden, with thy fresher green!
Come brighter Salem, gladden all the scene!

—REV. H. BONAR, D.D.

Miscellany.

SELECTIONS.

THE RESURRECTION.*

BY JAMES MONTGOMERY, ESQ.

Morning of the Sabbath-day !
O thou sweetest hour of prime !
Dart a retrospective ray
O'er the eastern hills of time ;
Daybreak let my spirit see
At the foot of Calvary.

Joseph's sepulchre is nigh ;
Here the seal upon the stone,
There the sentinel with eye,
Star-like, fixed on that alone ;
All around is calm and clear,
Life and death keep Sabbath here.

Bright and brighter, beam on beam,
Now like new-created light,
From the rock-cleft, gleam by gleam,
Shoots athwart the warring night ;
Till the splendour grows intense,
Overpowering mortal sense.

Glory turns with me to gloom ;
Sight, pulsation, thought, depart,
And the stone rent from the tomb
Seems to fall upon my heart :
With that shock the vision flies,
Christ is risen—and I may rise—

Rise like Him, as from this trance,
When the trumpet calls the just
To the saint's inheritance,
From their dwellings in the dust.
By thy resurrection's power,
Jesus, save me in that hour !

Sabbath morning ! hail to thee ;
O thou sweetest hour of prime !
From the foot of Calvary,
Now to Zion's top I climb ;
There my risen Lord to meet,
In his temple, at his feet.

* Not found in the Author's collected works, but in a periodical called the "Forget-Me-Not," to which he contributed it, in 1837.

THE RELIGION-WE WANT.

We want a religion that bears heavily, not only on the "exceeding sinfulness of sin," but on the exceeding rascality of lying and stealing. A religion that banishes small measures from the counters, small baskets from the stall, pebbles from the cotton-bags, clay from the paper, sand from sugar, chicory from coffee, alum from bread, and water from the milk-kaus. The religion that is to save the world will not put all the big strawberries at the top, and all little ones at the bottom. It will not make one-half pair of shoes of good leather, and the other half of poor leather, so that the first shall redound to the maker's credit, and the second to his cash. It will not put Jouvin's stamp on Jenkin's kid gloves; nor make Paris bonnets in the back room of a Boston milliner's shop; nor let a piece of velvet that professes to measure twelve yards come to an untimely end in the tenth, or a spool of sewing-silk that vouches for twenty yards be nipped in the bud at fourteen and a half; nor all wool delaines and all linen handkerchiefs be amalgamated with clandestine cotton; nor coats made of old rags pressed together be sold to the unsuspecting public for legal broadcloth. It does not put bricks at five dollars per thousand into chimneys; it contracts to build of seven dollar material; nor smuggle white pine into floors that have paid for hard pine; nor leave yawning cracks in closets where boards ought to join; nor daub the ceilings that ought to be smoothly plastered; nor make window-blinds with slats that cannot stand the wind, and paint that cannot stand the sun, and fastenings that may be looked at, but are on no account to be touched. The religion that is going to sanctify the world pays its debts. It does not consider that forty cents returned for one hundred cents given is according to the Gospel, though it may be according to law. It looks on a man who has failed in trade, and who continues to live in luxury, as a thief.—*The (Boston) Christian.*

A WORD IN SEASON.

"Never," said the late Rev. Thomas Mortimer, "lose an opportunity of speaking to your fellow-creatures about their souls and the world to come. Once," he added, "I sat with a military officer for a considerable time, waiting to see a gentleman, and I said not a word to him about his soul. I lost that opportunity much to my regret. Never," he subjoined, "lose an opportunity."

The writer, who heard these remarks from the lips of Mr. Mortimer in one of his pithy sermons, now five-and-twenty years ago, well remembers the impression they produced on his mind, and their effect on his conduct in that particular. Oh, what a luxury is contact with other minds about eternal things! Often it establishes a bond of heartfelt brotherhood, and engenders a double spring of love between them.

In a Sunday-morning walk to look after the neglectors of public worship, an aged man of comely aspect, helping a large body along with a pair of crutches, was accosted with the following salutation:—"I hope you are going where you will have no need for crutches. There will be no lame legs in heaven."

With a dejected countenance and a touching utterance, he replied, "I'm not going there. I am too great a sinner to go to heaven."

"So am I," I replied; but Christ has died for sinners, and his blood cleanseth from all sin; and if you and I do not go to heaven, it is our own fault. 'Him that cometh to Me,' the Saviour said, 'I will in no wise cast out.'"

The burden of sin lay heavy on my aged neighbour's mind, and well nigh excluded the hope of eternal life.

"I am too great a sinner," again he said, "to go to heaven."

To this it was replied with the words of Isaiah i. 16, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." As the sequel will show, this was made by Divine application "a word in season."

At parting, his name and address were taken, and an early visit made to his house, when he was found reading the Bible. Conversation and prayer, in which he heartily joined, concluded the interview. At our next meeting light began to enter his mind; and on a sub-

sequent occasion, when the first verse of Isaiah lv. was commenced, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters," he instantly, with joyful lips, exclaimed, "And he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price." And with evident heartfelt pathos he repeated the remaining part of the chapter.

Before we parted that day, looking through his tears to the cross, he repeated the hymn—

"Come, Thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
Streams of mercy never ceasing
Call for songs of loudest praise.

"Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God;
He, to rescue me from danger,
Interposed His precious blood."

Nor were these words the result of transient emotion and influence. No; his heart is fixed, trusting in God, through faith in the atonement of Christ, and waiting to be an inhabitant of the heavenly Jerusalem.

Brethren, let us keep in remembrance the exhortation of Mr. Thomas Mortimer, who, being dead, yet speaketh. Never let us lose an opportunity of speaking about the soul and the world to come to our fellow-travellers to eternity.

HOW TO PROMOTE A REVIVAL.

A revival of religion, like a fire, must begin somewhere: "Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!"

A fire often begins with a little match, and works its way through the combustible material about it until it has swept over a wide region. So a work of grace often commences with a single Christian—never with the whole Church. As soon as that one Christian is filled with the Holy Spirit, he goes after others, to lead them to the Saviour, or to induce believers to join him in efforts for a revival. Jesus fulfils His promise, "Lo, I am with you;" and others are soon moved and melted, and the work begins to widen.

So that whoever would promote a revival of religion should begin with his own heart, and pray, and confess, and believe, until he feels his heart all subdued and melted by the Holy Spirit—until his

love to Christ is glowing, fervid, burning—and until he finds himself groaning over the lost condition of men, and like Jesus, being in an agony, prays more earnestly.

Then, when his heart is in this state, let him get a few, if he cannot many, to join him in special prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit. Let that little company hold on in united, persistent prayer, "nothing wavering," until the windows of heaven are opened.

The disciples at Jerusalem continued in prayer about ten days, before they received the promised power from on high. It does not appear that the meeting, with so many ministers, in attendance, attracted much attention, until the disciples were fully anointed, and filled with the Spirit.

They could have accomplished but little had they preached and laboured without this preparation; but as soon as it was received, the multitude were drawn to the place in great numbers, and were confounded when they saw the power that rested on those Galileans; a new power attended their preaching. This work commenced with those believers, and spread with great rapidity all over the country.

So it must be with all who would labour successfully in leading souls to Christ; they must tarry at Jesus' feet until they have power with God—then they will have power with men. The gift there received will be with them wherever they go, diffusing its sweet and holy influence, and God's work will be revived, and sinners converted. I have observed for nearly forty years past that the secret of success in promoting revivals of religion is in having our own hearts filled with the Holy Spirit.

Let me say then to pastors and to the Churches: If you believe the glory of God demands a revival in your midst, and you desire to be instrumental in advancing the work, and bringing sinners to the Saviour, first see that your own hearts are thoroughly melted and subdued, under a deep sense of the condition of lost men, and that you are filled with the Spirit, and constrained by the love of Christ; then get a few, if you cannot more, to meet with you, and pray with and for one another, until like those who prayed with Peter and John, you are all filled with the Holy Spirit: then expect

a powerful revival of religion. Do not seek to produce an undue excitement in the community: but do not be afraid of as much interest as was manifest among the people on the day of Pentecost.

In your prayer-meetings have a definite object in view. If you desire an immediate outpouring of the Spirit, ask God for that; if the fulness of His love in your hearts, let that be the burden of your prayer; if the conversion of a friend, agonize for that: whatever your desire, look for it at once. "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." If you would have a great blessing, ask for it in faith, in Jesus' name. The Father has nothing too good or great to give for His Son's sake. Jesus is the pledge of all that Infinite Love can bestow, or that we can receive. "How shall he not with him also freely give us all things."

One of the divinely appointed means for promoting revivals of religion, is, at suitable times, to hold a series of meetings for days or weeks together. Among the other departments of ministerial labour, the Saviour appointed evangelists to assist in these meetings, whenever and wherever they might be needed.

In the days of Nehemiah, we find Ezra, the priest, on a pulpit of wood, which had been made for the occasion, engaged in a series of meetings, which continued for many days. Ezra and those who assisted him read and explained the Word of God one-fourth part of the day, and spent another fourth in prayer and confession of sin; in this way they continued the meeting until there was a great revival of religion among them, and a marked reform in their habits and manner of living. Neh. viii. 9.

The apostles also, after Christ's ascension, held a meeting about ten days, with a large number of ministers present. "These, all continued, with one accord [day by day], in prayer and supplication with the women," until the Spirit was poured out upon them, and they received the promised power from on high. Then they were ready for a larger congregation; and the multitudes were quickly attracted to the place, and the displays of grace were so marvellous, and the conversions so numerous, that there was an addition to the Church, on a single day of the meeting, of about 3,000 new members.

Let me then again say to all Christians who desire and labour for the conversion of souls: First, be right yourself; spend days and nights, if necessary, in humiliation, fasting, and prayer, until the Spirit comes upon you, and you feel that you have power with God; then you will have power with men in leading them to Christ.

Let none of us who proclaim the Gospel, preach complaining and scolding sermons, or make unkind remarks about those who differ from us, or who do not come up to the work as we would have them.

Let the melting, subduing love of Christ flow from our hearts and lips; the unconverted will then begin to cry out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" And we shall find ourselves in the midst of a glorious outpouring of the Spirit, with a host of busy hands and loving hearts about us, reaping and bringing in the sheaves, and with no more need of asking, "How can I best promote a revival?"—From "*Bringing in Sheaves.*"

WHAT TO PREACH.

Every sermon should contain in itself sufficient of God's truth to save a soul. Let the subject be what it may, it should comprise a plain and simple offer of eternal life to the dead ones present. Remember that every congregation is composed of two classes, the believer and the unbeliever, the saved and the unsaved, the children of God and the children of the devil; and while the people of God desire to be led into sweet pastures by their shepherd, the troubled and the anxious come to find rest—to enter into peace.

First, be sure to discriminate your hearers. Let them feel that there is a difference—a momentous difference. Provide food, meat, milk for the children, but do not delude the unsaved by letting them think that such things are for them before they have been born again. Do not let them hear "Peace, peace, when there is no peace." Let the children depart fed with the bread of life, but make the unbeliever uneasy; plough the conscience of the formalist—the unconcerned—the self-deceiving; make the anxious more troubled until they find

rest in Christ; to the inquiring soul offer Christ in all his fulness, a free gift for his acceptance.

Do not be afraid or ashamed of common texts, such as—

"Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

"God so loved the world, that He gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

"Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth."

"Through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins."

"The Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

"I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners."

"The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Be not afraid or ashamed of the old foundation truths—

Ruin in Adam, redemption in Christ.

The inherent depravity of human nature.

The incurability of the natural heart.

The utter sinfulness of sin.

The curse, the wrath, the sentence of condemnation on the sinner.

CHRIST the perfect God and perfect Man.

CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

CHRIST the Sacrifice once for all offered.

The efficacy of THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.

The absolute necessity of conversion, or the new birth.

The agency of the Holy Spirit.

Justification through faith in Jesus Christ alone.

Sanctification through the Spirit and the Word.

CHRIST, our "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

CHRIST, at the right hand of God, our Advocate, Intercessor, Forerunner.

CHRIST, coming again to judge the world, and to receive His people unto Himself, to be for ever with the Lord.

Remember the solemn adjuration of Paul to Timothy: "I charge thee therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; PREACH THE WORD; be instant in season, out of season."

Also the words of the Lord—

"GO YE INTO ALL THE WORLD, AND PREACH THE GOSPEL TO EVERY CREATURE."

Editor's Portfolio

(To the Editor of *Earnest Christianity*.)

THE CRUCIFIXION AND RESURRECTION.

REV. SIR,—In your excellent article on "Eastertide," &c., in the March number of *EARNEST CHRISTIANITY*, you introduce a stanza from Whittier, which I think is calculated to mislead those who are not sufficiently conversant with the subject. It is the third and fourth lines of the verse referred to, to which I take exception. The lines read thus,—

"Well may the sheeted dead come forth
To gaze upon a suffering God!"

Now it is evidently the design of the author of the above lines to give the idea that "many of the saints which slept arose" *at the time of the crucifixion*. But what saith the Scriptures? (Read Matt. 27 : 52, 53.) "And the graves were opened; and many of the bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after His resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." Here it is plainly stated that it was "*after his* (Christ's) *resurrection*" that the saints appeared. I cannot, therefore, see upon what authority the assertion is based that it was at the time of the crucifixion, and that they "gazed upon a suffering God." It will be observed, upon a little reflection, that a very serious error is involved in such a supposition, inasmuch as it flatly contradicts the plain declaration of St. Paul, that Christ was the "first-fruits of them that slept." *Vide* that incomparable chapter on the Resurrection, 1 Cor. 15.

I should like the above to appear in your magazine, believing as I do that the erroneous notion above referred to is already entertained by many persons, and ought to be refuted instead of confirmed. I may just add that I was under the same delusion, supposing that it all transpired at the time of the crucifixion of our Saviour, until I was undeceived, some time ago, by a hint in a conversation with our beloved and highly intelligent pastor, the Rev. Samuel Fear.

Very sincerely yours,

JAMES LAWSON.

Battersea, March 6th, 1873.

IN MEMORIAM.

The following verses in memory of the late Edward Jackson, Esq., by two different contributors, have been sent to us by a correspondent with a request for their insertion in *EARNEST CHRISTIANITY*. Believing that the memory of one so deservedly beloved ought to be perpetuated, we gladly give the verses a place in the "Editor's Portfolio":—

I.

A city set upon a hill,
It calm and spotless lies
Above the haunts of evil men,
Beneath autumnal skies.

But winter snows begin to fall,
And blow the frosty breath;
Behold the snow-clad city now—
How beautiful in death!

A candle in a candlestick,
Not hidden from the sight,
But placed where all within may see
The brilliance of its light!

But soon the flickering light grew dim—
A harbinger of day;
"The Sun of Righteousness arose"—
The last spark died away!

A soul that trusted in the Lord,
Though trials came apace,
And happiness, and worldly gains,
To try the power of Grace.

A heart that rested on the Lord—
That loved as he had learned—
The chastened, yearning love of God—
The lambent flame that burned!

A mind that grew into the light,
Communing with the Lord—
That read the healing words of love,
And trusted on His word.

A hand that opened to the poor—
That healed many a grief;
The widow and the fatherless
Have blessed its kind relief.

A man, that, weary with the weight
Of three-score years and ten,
Turned to receive his just reward,
And left the paths of men.

A coffin and a grave below—
A body lowly laid,
Treasures secure from moth and rust,
Joys that shall never fade.

Below, the cry of stricken friends—
The weary heart and hand—
The memory of happier days—
The footprints in the sand.

Above, the "cloud of witnesses,"
The welcome words, "Well done;"
And weariness is lost in death,
And Christ and Heaven are won.

Below, are pain and solitude,
To those who fondly grieve;
Above, a joy no tongue can tell—
No finite mind conceive.

July 16th, 1872.

A. G. L.

II.

Faded into the beauty of death,
In the calm, still even' of light;
Borne down by the weight of honored years,
Ripe for a harvest—not of tears,
But of everlasting life.

Breathe not his name but in tenderest tones—
The softest whispers of love,—
For his prints are deep on the sands of time;
Acts of kindness and deeds sublime,
That meri' reward above.

There's a broken chord and a missing note,
A song with a sad refrain,
A heart bowed down and a soul oppressed,
An angel soaring to realms of rest,
A glance that we seek in vain.

A sorrowful heart and a lonely way,
A cross that is heavy to bear;
But a voice thro' the gloom of the silent night,—
The cloud of sorrow fringed with light—
The calm sweet hour of prayer.

The cross is lightened, the burden gone:
'Tis the path His feet have trod,
Through this vale of tears to the grand forever;
The union of hearts at the shining river,
Close by the throne of God.

Hamilton, July 19th, 1872.

H. T. C.

In Italy, the work of evangelization still goes on with encouraging results. There are several religious periodicals which warmly support the cause of a free Gospel, and urge the people to study the Scriptures for themselves. A Bible Society has also been organized, and already the Scriptures have been issued from its press.

NOTWITHSTANDING the great political changes that are taking place in Spain, the spread of Gospel truth has not ceased. Preachers and Evangelists are penetrating the country in every direction, scattering, as they go, the precious seed.

ANOTHER secession from the Established Church has taken place on account of the Bennet decision. The Rev. Richard Gardner, Vicar of Christ Church, Winchester, an officiating clergyman of nearly forty years' standing, has felt it to be his duty to withdraw from the Establishment.

"The First Union," and "Notes on the Methodist Rules," are both crowded out of the present number. They will appear in due time.

WE are pleased to be able to say that our subscription list is still advancing. Every mail brings the names of new subscribers. A little effort on those Circuits not yet represented, will make our undertaking a decided success. Leaders and Local Preachers are requested to act as Agents. A free copy to any one sending us five subscribers with the money.

BOOK NOTICES.

Walks and Homes of Jesus. By REV. DANIEL MARCH, D.D. Toronto: J. Ackland, Agent.

Dr. March is a graceful writer, and in his "Walks and Homes of Jesus" he presents a vivid picture of the earthly surroundings of the Son of Man. As a book for spare hours and Sabbath afternoons it may be unreservedly commended; while the beauty of the engravings, and the handsome "get up" of the whole volume, renders it a becoming ornament for the centre table.

Our Father's House; or, The Unwritten Word.
By the same Author.

An interesting and eloquent description of the most striking objects in the material universe, illustrating the wisdom and glory of the Creator. It forms a suitable companion volume to the "Walks and Homes of Jesus;" and will be a useful addition to any library.

AT THE DOOR.

"Behold, I have set before thee an open Door."—REV. iii. 8.

UNA LOCKE.

REV. R. LOWRY.

Tenderly.

1. The mistakes of my life are many, The sins of my heart are more,

And I scarce can see for weep - ing, But I kneel at the o - pen door.

CHORUS.

I know I am weak and sinful, It comes to me more and more; But

since the dear Saviour has bid me come in, I'll en - ter that o - pen door.

- 2 I am lowest of those who love Him,
I am weakest of those who pray;
But I come as He has bidden,
And He will not say me Nay.
Chorus: "I know I am weak," &c.
- 3 My mistakes His free grace will cover,
My sins He will wash away,

- And the feet that shrink and falter
Shall walk through the gate of day.
Chorus: "I know I am weak," &c.
- 4 The mistakes of my life are many,
And my spirit is sick of sin;
And I scarce can see for weeping,
But the Saviour will let me in.
Chorus: "I know I am weak," &c.