

Technical and Bibliographic Notes / Notes techniques et bibliographiques

The Institute has attempted to obtain the best original copy available for scanning. Features of this copy which may be bibliographically unique, which may alter any of the images in the reproduction, or which may significantly change the usual method of scanning are checked below.

L'Institut a numérisé le meilleur exemplaire qu'il lui a été possible de se procurer. Les détails de cet exemplaire qui sont peut-être uniques du point de vue bibliographique, qui peuvent modifier une image reproduite, ou qui peuvent exiger une modification dans la méthode normale de numérisation sont indiqués ci-dessous.

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Coloured covers /
Couverture de couleur | <input type="checkbox"/> | Coloured pages / Pages de couleur |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Covers damaged /
Couverture endommagée | <input type="checkbox"/> | Pages damaged / Pages endommagées |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Covers restored and/or laminated /
Couverture restaurée et/ou pelliculée | <input type="checkbox"/> | Pages restored and/or laminated /
Pages restaurées et/ou pelliculées |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Cover title missing /
Le titre de couverture manque | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Pages discoloured, stained or foxed/
Pages décolorées, tachetées ou piquées |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Coloured maps /
Cartes géographiques en couleur | <input type="checkbox"/> | Pages detached / Pages détachées |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Coloured ink (i.e. other than blue or black) /
Encre de couleur (i.e. autre que bleue ou noire) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Showthrough / Transparence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Coloured plates and/or illustrations /
Planches et/ou illustrations en couleur | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Quality of print varies /
Qualité inégale de l'impression |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Bound with other material /
Relié avec d'autres documents | <input type="checkbox"/> | Includes supplementary materials /
Comprend du matériel supplémentaire |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Only edition available /
Seule édition disponible | <input type="checkbox"/> | Blank leaves added during restorations may
appear within the text. Whenever possible, these
have been omitted from scanning / Il se peut que
certaines pages blanches ajoutées lors d'une
restauration apparaissent dans le texte, mais,
lorsque cela était possible, ces pages n'ont pas
été numérisées. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Tight binding may cause shadows or distortion
along interior margin / La reliure serrée peut
causer de l'ombre ou de la distorsion le long de la
marge intérieure. | | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Additional comments /
Commentaires supplémentaires: | | Continuous pagination. |

THE MERCIFUL AND THEIR BLESSING.

BY REV. THOMAS HENDERSON, PERTH, C. W.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.—*Mat. v, 7.*

Sympathy and compassion towards the suffering and needy may spring from natural affection. The light of revelation may enlarge this affection, or the darkness of infidelity, paganism, or mammonism may diminish or extinguish it. The compassion of men who continue to walk after the course of this world, extends to man's temporal condition; that of men renewed in the spirit of their mind, to his spiritual interests. The merciful who have "obtained mercy" seek to bless with double blessing the fallen and the needy. Wherever mercy is found, true and Christlike, it seeks to restore peace to the soul of man and also to alleviate his physical sufferings. No grace more adorns renewed humanity. Nor can the disciple of Christ more surely make progress than by vividly realizing the mercy God has manifested, and seeking to be "merciful as his Father is merciful."

When Jesus on the Mount spake with authority, and not as the Scribes, sweet words of blessing fell from his lips, dropping as dew upon those who sought good for themselves; sweet, too, were the words of benediction which fell on those who valued life and power as means of blessing others. "Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy."

THE MERCY OF THE CHRIST-BLESSED IS NOT MERE CONCERN FOR THE HAPPINESS OF THOSE OF THE SAME NATION OR TRIBE.—Men may be found whose sympathies are thus contracted. They may for instance regard the condition of the white man while they coolly disregard the oppressions and sorrows of the negro; but true mercy knows no distinction of color

or of clime but extends the hand to the suffering, whosoever or wherever they may be, of human kind.

IT KNOWS NO SECT.

There are men, who, when persecution or oppression arise against those who wear the same badge, or are enrolled in the same party with them, are roused to action on their behalf, but yet can look without sympathy on the persecuted or the oppressed who utter not their shibboleth. This is mere love of party, and is not of that true philanthropy that reflects God's love to man. True mercy sorrows at the sufferings of any member of the human family, and has ever joined with it the earnest desire to alleviate or remove them. The merciful cannot look on wrongs unmoved. He has the will, and if he has the power will use it to shelter and defend.

IT IS FORGIVING.

The merciful man will be readily disposed to forbearance, through which peace in communities will be secured—without this disposition there will be confusion and every evil work. Mercy will dispose to forgiveness. The cruel, harsh, and unfeeling, are prone to cherish revenge; while the merciful will be ready to forgive and withhold from inflicting injury.

IT REFLECTS GOD'S MERCY.

"The merciful" in the highest and broadest sense are those who show mercy like God. *Mercy obtained* is their pattern.—Did the Eternal bear with their ignorance, sin, and obstinacy? Did he freely forgive their iniquities? As he has been long-suffering and has "multiplied to pardon,"

so the soul, conscious of His mercy, forbears with ignorance, wrong, and obstinacy and, "as God for Christ's sake has forgiven," so freely forgives.

THE FIELD OF MERCY'S OPERATION

Is wide, wide as the range of human ignorance, error, and suffering. The priests of old were required to be "merciful men, having compassion on the ignorant and those that are out of the way." In ignorance is rooted much of man's misery. Above all, ignorance of God begets, and ever will beget, evil. The Christianly merciful man, as a priest unto God, will manifest his compassion by efforts to spread spiritual knowledge, that men may "know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent, whom to know is life eternal—acting with intelligence and wisdom he will not only weep over misery, but will labour to remove its cause. Mere sentimentalism may lead men to say "How fearful the amount of misery and wretchedness, that might be at once removed, did the miserable and wretched know the gospel!" but true compassion will lead to effort—will guide the hand to earnest labour, to bring men to the knowledge of Christ—will not exhaust itself in mere well wishing, but bestow its strength on well acting.

ABUNDANCE OF WORK

For the merciful there will be, where *the erring* are so numerous. As they judge and speak of their fellow men, how many seem, to imagine that continual progress in the straight road of right action is the rule and not the exception among men. Their thoughts skim the surface of society, nor have they honestly examined themselves—narrowly looked to their own thoughts and actions, else they had understood their own errors and formed a juster estimate of poor fallen humanity, with all its proneness to go wrong. Many who have not so glaringly erred, had they been

surrounded by the same temptations would have fallen as others have—had not their way been hedged up by parental care or other favorable circumstances, they had also entered into those evil courses which have marred men's lives and brought misery upon themselves and others. Beware of Pharisaic pride, and instead of coldly uttering "Stand by for I am holier than thou," deal gently with the erring. In the spirit of love, of mercy, labour to correct their errors. So did He who came "to seek that which was lost." Withhold not the helping hand because the sufferer does not deserve relief. A fellow mortal suffers—you may know the cause—his misery is the fruit of sin—you know it, what then? If yours is the ministry of the merciful, remembering that it is God's to pardon or to punish—you will feel that you have to do with the misery, and seeking to act "as the children of the Highest," who is kind unto the unthankful and the evil you will be "merciful." To wait until we are satisfied that the needy one is an innocent or guilty sufferer ere we show kindness, is to act on the false notion that we are here the ministers of justice and not of mercy. Men may act thus from the absence of deep conviction of their own sinfulness and their need of the mercy of God. Self-righteousness sets aside mercy—petrifies the feelings—makes a man harsh, cruel, unforgiving; hence the contrast between the life and action of many professors of religion, and the gentleness, meekness, and compassion of Christ. Would that men would weigh well their own deserts and ponder the solemn utterance of Messiah, "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again!"

MERCY GOES CHEERFULLY TO WORK.

It wears no traits of a mean and grudging spirit. The merciful man gives,—God smiles. "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver." Paul writes to the Romans, "He

that sheweth mercy with cheerfulness," that is, let him do it with cheerfulness.— Probably he refers to official duty in connection with the Church; but surely the rule may apply to all "shewing of mercy." This manner alone befits the spirit of mercy. Selfishness may prompt the act of seeming mercy, to have done with the trouble, or to sustain a sham profession.— True, God-like mercy wears no seeming goodness. Much of worldly goods the merciful man may not have, but yet his unfeigned compassion is as a healing balm to the woe-stricken and the needy. The rich man's dollar tossed to the urgent beggar has a power, but not for the higher good; it heals no heart-wound, makes no sweet impress of goodness on the soul, uproots no bitterness. Let the merciful *try* to meet the want, earnestly, gently.— The very manifestation of will has power to wake new life in withered humanity as it falls like spring showers on the soul.

MIGHTY IS THE INFLUENCE OF MERCY.

Its outgoings are with power. Not the storm-power that makes the habitations of men tremble, tears the forest, and spreads out its scenes of ruin; but the spring power that melts the snow, loosens the earth and clothes nature with its lovely summer garb of green. Divine mercy subdues the stubborn, takes away the heart of stone, and leads men to sweet friendship with God and submission to his will. Like power has the mercy of the christian, the soul in harmony with God, in fellowship with the suffering of, Christ, softens, subdues, and reconciles. Many a sinner who has hardened himself under the denunciations of stern law, and kicked hard against the convictions of right, has surrendered at the approach of mercy.— "Mercy with gentleness," has entered by the chinks of the sin-armour, touched the heart and melted its enmity. Mercy, with its beseeching voice and helping hands,

restores the wanderer, guides the erring, inspires hope, elevates and purifies the heart. The toils of the merciful have been seen in all lands blessed with the gospel,— in the perils of those who have shrunk from no hardship, persecution, or even from death itself, whilst labouring, if by any means they might save some." There too are seen their triumphs in Sabbath gatherings of glad worshippers, and the peace, order, and unity, that have supplanted strife, envy, and enmity. Their toils are written in self-denied efforts to supply the wants of the poor, comfort the mourning, and reclaim the outcast. Their triumphs are seen in the sheltered orphan,— the widow whose heart sings for joy,— the mourning consoled with blessed hope —and the lost and wretched prodigal once more at home, resting in peace beneath his father's roof.

OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN IS MERCIFUL.

Through every dispensation, His mercy has been displayed. In the ears of ancient Israel he was proclaimed as, "The LORD, the Lord God, merciful and gracious."— His mercy is seen in providence, as "he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." It is seen in his "long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish." It is seen in the plan of human redemption, in setting forth his Son Jesus, the propitiation for our sins and in the welcome of the sinful to the provisions of his grace. Mercy marked the steps of the Son of God on his mission to our earth. It urged him on his weary journeys, and led him away down among the publicans and sinners. It shone out amid the varied scenes of his wondrous life. On the multitudes who gathered around the Great Teacher, he looked with compassion. In mercy he had toiled, preaching repentance; and he weeps, in mercy, over the impenitent. How his compassionate soul is wrung as he laments,

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen her brood under *her* wings, and ye would not!" Hated "without a cause," buffeted, mocked, spitted on, at length led to the place called Calvary; there they crucified him. Behold the crucified! His countenance betrays no vengeful feelings. Mercy still dwells in his loving heart; he compassionates even his cruel persecutors as he prays, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do."

' AS HE IS SO ARE WE IN THIS WORLD.'

The same traits of character which he displayed, are to be displayed in his people. The absence of mercy will wholly mar the likeness; this was the grand feature in him, and will be in those who are truly his. The righteous in every age have been merciful. "Righteous," and "merciful" seem to be used as synonymous by Isaiah, when he says, "The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come." Isa. lvii, 1. The Psalmist describing the righteous says, Psa. xxxvii, 26, "He is ever merciful," or as the margin gives, "*All the day merciful*," unwearied in showing compassion.—Unmercifulness neutralizes religious profession and secures woe to the professors. Thus Jesus spake, "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithes of mint, and anise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith." You may pay to support ministers, and missionaries down to the very tithing of the herbs, that grow in your garden, although that would be a rare thing now-a-days.—Yet what avails, if you "deal not your bread to the hungry"—if you fail to "show mercy and compassion every man to his

brother"—if you put not on "bowels of mercies"—if you "let the sun go down upon your wrath," and fail to cherish the true Spirit of Christ, which will lead you to be "tender hearted, forbearing one another, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you?" What utterance, what act, can ward off the woe, that hangs over a profession, that lacks the God-approved stamp of mercy—the essential evidence of true piety.

BENEDICTION RESTS ON THE MERCIFUL.

"Blessed are the merciful." The Eternal is blessed. His word of peace, the gospel, is the expression of his goodness, and is styled "the glorious gospel of the blessed God." He opens his hand and supplies the wants of all living. He provides salvation for the lost—gives eternal life—and in bestowing is the Happy God. The merciful have their distinguishing mark of moral and spiritual relation to him. They are the children of the highest, are of heaven's nobility, and while they know from experience that it is more blessed to give than to receive, they possess the earnest of the future undefiled inheritance.

HAPPINESS GROWS WITH THE EXERCISE OF MERCY.

Cherish the feelings and do the deeds of mercy, and you uproot selfishness from your heart. Let a man look only on his own things, and seek to serve self at every turn in life, and he will only heap up misery. For while "the merciful man doeth good to his soul," "he that is cruel troubleth his own flesh." We are so constituted that right, loving, merciful action secures a present reward, and is thus doubly blessing.

"The quality of mercy is not strained.

It droppeth as the gentle dew from heaven
Upon the place beneath. It is twice blessed,
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes.

GOD PROVIDES THAT THE MERCIFUL
SHALL OBTAIN MERCY,

And in the security of this provision they are blessed. It is not needful to confine

our view of this blessedness to the future state. Not only in the final judgment but in the present state of being we may see abundant illustrations of the divine rule "Whatsoever a man soweth that also shall he reap," as men live now, so may their future on earth be sorrow or joy, misery or happiness. Men forget God—forget that *there is a God*, who controls and directs human events, who "tempers the blast to the shorn lamb" and "covers the heads of his people in the day of battle." Here, as well as in eternity, selfishness has its reward. Despots, who had lived in oppression, have been made to tremble in their shaking thrones, and, as they fell, have heard the triumphal shout of the very subjects whom, by their cruelty, they had cursed—men, who have mercilessly wielded power over their fellowmen, have maddened by oppression the victims of their cruelty, and, as by the out-breaking of a volcano, have been hurled from their place, and while the "feet of the poor *and* the steps of the needy" have trod upon their glory have reaped as they sowed.

"In the dark hour of sorrow,
The heartless will learn,
That God deals the blow
For the mitherless bairn."

The merciful *also* reap in time. They may need, and as they need, experience favor from their fellowmen. The merciful man may lose the power which once he used so well, but, bad as our world is, all is not ingratitude, forgetfulness of good, and he will yet be loved, revered, and befriended.

THE FAVOR OF GOD WILL BE UPON THE
MERCIFUL

Happiness, to which the unmerciful are ever strangers, will be theirs. Beautifully does Isaiah exhibit the work of the merciful, "To loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke, to deal thy bread to the hungry,

and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house; when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh." And mark the blessing, "Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily, and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the *Lord* shall be thy reward. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer."

IN THE FINAL JUDGMENT

They shall be blessed, "they shall obtain mercy;" that, which all will need, the merciful shall obtain. Christian mercy flows from mercy received from the hand of God, and is the prophetic sign of future and eternal blessing. "The apostle Paul prays for one who had shown much compassionate sympathy. "The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain. But when he was at Rome he sought me out very diligently and found me. The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day." "The gift of God is eternal life." The *title* to the heavenly inheritance is conveyed by the mercy of God, through the blood of the Lamb. The grace of mercy, guiding the redeemed to God like-action here, earth also fits them for that inheritance. "The children of the Highest" who have this hope, and are merciful "as their Father is merciful," are blessed indeed. When these labors of love are done, and all the toils of earth are past, they shall hear the joyous sound of welcome, "Well done, good and faithful servant." "Come ye blessed of my Father."

"BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL FOR THEY SHALL OBTAIN MERCY."

Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me.—Ps. lv. 5.

Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine.—Isa. xliii. 1.

**"OF PURER EYES THAN TO
BEHOLD INIQUITY."**

I HAVE a girl in my kitchen whom I have been vainly endeavouring to train into a good servant for many months past. This week I dismissed her as a hopeless subject. Her chief disqualification is, that she is not in the least offended or disgusted by any amount nor any kind of dirt. She is not simply dirty because she does not know to keep clean, but dirt is not disagreeable to her. Let all good housekeepers testify, and I think they will all agree, that a person who feels no repugnance to untidiness can never be made to be thoroughly clean and tidy.

Discouraged and out of patience and cast down by my vain endeavours, I have been drawn to think of the wonderful long-suffering and forbearance of God towards a world of sinners. Evermore teaching us; patiently correcting us; encouraging our feeblest attempts; never weary; never discouraged; never giving us up; never ceasing to love and pity, notwithstanding the hatred he has to sin—it is wonderful! only God could do it. And we are like this hopeless servant. *Sin does not offend us.*

Often am I obliged to leave my kitchen in disgust at what my eyes see. Hands all black from handling coal, the next moment leaving their marks on doors, or drawers, or whatever may be nearest. Innumerable like doings that cannot be mentioned. But the girl is not only not disturbed herself, she looks at me in utter wonder at my dislike of her dirty ways; she cannot comprehend me; she has not the faintest idea how far short she falls in my estimation.

So we. Sin does not offend us, and we can by no means comprehend how offensive it is to God.

"How much easier, how much better, how much more hopeful," I often say, "it is to be clean and tidy." But she does not find it so, and I cannot change her; so I give her up.

Happily for us, the Lord can do what man cannot. *He can change us.* He can cause us to see sin in its true light, and bring us to be offended by it, and to aspire after something better. Then holiness becomes desirable; something to be longed for, and attained at all hazards and costs.

And when we have in some measure attained, then we begin to understand how offensive in its very nature sin must be to a holy soul.

Not many years since, I watched by the dying-bed of a precious sister. All who saw that last scene were ready to exclaim, "Let my last end be like hers." Great was her faith, and wonderful her patience and child-like submission. And marvellous indeed it was to see her part from husband and children, in whom her very life had seemed bound up, without a tear, committing them with a smile of ineffable love and trust to her Saviour; and beautiful were her anticipations of her heaven with Him whom she adored. But all these did not, to my mind, so surely indicate her fitness for that heaven, as did her invariable and instant shrinking from all sin. An impatient fretful expression, the least appearance of selfishness, or repining at the good will of the Lord, seemed to jar on her spirit like a rude discord on a finely attuned ear. The very thought of sin was painful to her. The holy nature had replaced the unholy, and its very instincts started back from evil. She was prepared to dwell among the sanctified; she was already clothed with the fine linen, clean and white. Earth was no longer a fit abode for her, and I wished her joy with all my heart, when she entered in through the gates into the city, wherein nothing that defileth can be found. Who can conceive of bliss so perfect and complete as to be one's self holy, and to dwell for ever among the holy?

Come, Lord Jesus; by thy Spirit convince us all of sin, and cleanse us from it. Clothe us also in spotless robe, and take us away from all sight, and sound, and sense of evil for evermore.

**"I WILL DWELL IN THE HOUSE OF
THE LORD FOR EVER."**

Psalm xxiii. 6.

Still may thy sweet mercy spread
A shady arm above my head,
About my paths; so shall I find
The fair centre of my mind
Thy temple, and those lovely walls
Bright ever with a beam that falls
Fresh from the pure glance of thine eye,
Lighting to eternity.
There I'll dwell for ever; there
Will I find a purer air
To feed my life with; there I'll sup
Balm and nectar in my cup;
And thence my ripe soul will breathe
Warm into the arms of Death.

—Richard Crashaw.

THOUGHTS ON REVIVAL.

The Church of God has been represented by the moon, and very justly so, because, like the moon, she possesses a borrowed light, and is subject to constant change. Sometimes she is luminous with brightness, and then eclipsed by darkness; this age conspicuous in the ecclesiastical hemisphere, and the next so little seen and felt as scarcely to be recognised. It was thus with the Jewish Church. During the reigns of David and Solomon the cause of God was in a flourishing state; but, alas! these eminent men had not long slept in the sepulchres of their fathers, when idolatrous notions and tendencies possessed the people and Ichabod was written on the walls of Zion. It has been thus with the Christian Church. In the primitive age she was like the moon in her full—beautiful to behold; but in the subsequent centuries, especially from the sixth to the sixteenth, she was like the moon, eclipsed and all but retired from view. The doctrines of the church were encrusted with the traditions of men, the ordinances of the church were superseded by the pompous ritual and theatrical performances of men, whilst the purity of the church was destroyed by the lordly assumptions, the avaricious passions, and ungodly conduct of a hypocritical priesthood. Such was the state of the professedly Christian Church before the Reformation—, when preaching was despised, the Scriptures proscribed, and the rights of conscience invaded by the hierarchy of Rome. And now, in the nineteenth century, after all the lessons the church has received, and the sufferings she has endured, there is still a tendency to substitute the form for the reality, the services of the minister for individual faith, and thus to transfer personal responsibility to those who have the care of souls. Nor is this unsatisfactory state of things confined to the church of Rome; there is much of it in the Established Church in this country, and amongst other bodies of ecclesiastical organizations. Nonconformists are not so consistent and holy as they ought to be. There are happy exceptions, it is true, and we rejoice to acknowledge it; yet the great bulk of our members are too much influenced by the spirit and practices of the world. It is difficult in these days to distinguish many of them from those who make no profession of religion at all; they seem to manifest the same regard for its fashions, its applauses, and especially its wealth. The love of money, which has ever been the sin of the world, has too long become the sin of the church; the mammon of covetousness has erected a throne in the heart of many professors, and thousands of them daily bow before its shrine. Hence, such is the all-absorbing passion for worldly

gain, that in multitudes of instances the weekly meetings of the church are forsaken, and the pastor is left comparatively alone.— There is then a lack of united prayer, and consequently a lack of divine influence. The Spirit is not poured out from on high, and, so far from the wilderness being a fruitful field, and the fruitful field being counted for a forest, Zion too much resembles a garden whose verdure is scarcely seen, and every plant and flower is parched, withered, and drooping. The Church, therefore, needs to realize the promise which the heavenly husbandman is waiting to perform; “I will make them, and the places round about my hill, a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessings.”

I. But in what does a revival of religion consist?

1. Wherever there is a genuine revival of religion in a church there will be, *an increase of religion in the person.* The principles of individual godliness are faith, purity, spirituality, and devotedness to the service of God— But it is often too much the case, that these principles, though not dead, are dormant; though not absolutely destroyed, are feeble and inactive. Faith is small as a grain of mustard-seed, as weak as a bruised reed, and therefore fitted neither to endure great trials nor to engage in great services. The Christian lives by sense rather than by faith, and is more disposed to trust the creature than to rely upon the Creator. In this state his purity suffers, and secret sins are indulged.— His mind gets overcharged with the cares of daily life, and he cleaves to the earth as his chief good. In this state his religion is little better than a form, for the life of it has well nigh expired. The Scriptures no longer appear as an invaluable mine, from which he may be enriched; or as a flourishing garden, where fruits may be obtained of every flavor; or, as a clear, ever-flowing spring, from whence he may drink, as from the fount of eternal love. The throne of grace has, moreover, lost its attraction, and prayer is restrained before God. Hence the language, once used, cannot be used now; “Truly my fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.” Such is the condition of many who have backslidden in heart from God. But what is religion where there is no soul? what is its form without its power?— Is it not an insipid, a tasteless thing? Is it not like a flower without a perfume? like salt that has lost its savour? like a picture where there is no life? like an automaton which at best is but a machine? True piety cannot feed on wind; cannot be amused with shadows; cannot be satisfied with the shell.— True piety must have the substance, the

reality, the very kernel of religion, and then it will flourish and grow.

2. But when there is a revival of religion, *there will be an increase of interest in the spiritual welfare of the church.* By the church we mean the community of believers, wherever they may be found, especially those with whom we are in Christian fellowship.—The church is designed by God to become a vast and mighty apparatus for the good of mankind. But if it is to become efficient to this object it must be preserved in proper condition, and act the part assigned to it by the commands and arrangements of God. Look for a moment at the comparisons used in Scripture, and see how this obligation appears.

The church is compared to a garden or vineyard, where there is every kind of plants and flowers. But a garden will not prosper without careful and laborious cultivation.—Leave it to itself, and it will soon be overrun with thorns and briars, thus becoming as unsightly to the eye, as it will be valueless to its owner. Who that has any interest in his plantation would leave it in such a state?—And shall we be indifferent to the church, the garden of the Great Husbandman, which he has chosen, and planted, and fenced? Can we walk in this garden and see here a plant drooping, there a flower fading, and in all directions the signs and proofs of decay?—Shall it be nothing to us that the principles, graces, and energies of the church are impaired, and that so little is done to make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert as the Paradise of God?

But the church is compared to a body, the mystical body of Christ, composed of many members, of which he alone is the head.—But what object more unsightly in itself, and more distressing to behold than a weakly, diseased, emaciated, deformed body? Yet such a scene is presented when the church becomes carnal, worldly, inactive, and unmindful of her high vocation as the Lord's anointed, and his witness to the world. Surely those who are anxious that Zion may prosper, will pray and seek that the church, "speaking the truth in love, may grow up unto Christ in all things, being joined together and being compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part."

But the Church is compared to a temple—a spiritual house, a habitation for the ever-living and ever-blessed God. And shall this structure exist and not be occupied by him who dwells between the cherubim? Shall the fair stones be disfigured, separated, and lose their symmetry and position? Shall the altar of incense be thrown down, the fire of devotion grow dim, and the lamps of the

temple lose their light, because they are not supplied with oil? This can never be when the church is alive to her responsibilities and privileges, and the welfare of Zion is as dear to Christians as she is dear to Him who purchased her with a great price, and saves her by great grace.

3. Then, finally, if there be a revival *there will be an increase of converts to the doctrines and ordinances of the church.* It can scarcely be said the church prospers when such words as these are never heard—"What must we do to be saved?" or, "Sir, we would see Jesus." In the absence of such inquiries there may be peace and harmony, but we doubt whether there is life and energy. There may be a calm, but who knows not that calms are unfavourable to health, and unsuited to progress? Where there is no wind the sails are not spread, and until the canvass is spread and filled, the bark is not wafted on her voyage. There is such a thing as being at ease in Zion; but ease is not increase.—We are aware that mere additions to the church are not always a sign of prosperity, for it is possible to enlarge the temple of the Lord with unsuitable stones and untempered mortar. And yet who can be satisfied when many in the congregation are not sanctified, and the dry bones always remain as they were? "It is a dismal thing," says the great and holy John Howe, "when conversions are grown rare and inferior in number to apostacies; when Christians are not born so fast as they die. This ought to be considered a thing of dreadful import, when the Spirit works not as he has been wont to do, to rescue souls from the state of condemnation and ruin!" Yes, such a state of things is dreadful indeed, for it indicates the displeasure of the Lord, who withhold his saving power, whilst, at the same time, multitudes are living in ignorance, dying in their sins, and sinking into the regions of unutterable woe. Our views of a genuine revival take in—the increase of godliness in the person—the increase of interest in the welfare of the church—and the increase of its members by additions from the world.

II. But what are the means by which a revival may be promoted?

Whatever those means may be, one thing is very clear—we must hold fully and firmly the truth that all genuine revivals come from God. The machinery may be most perfect, nothing may be wanting, nothing may be deficient in its various parts. It may have every required wheel, crank, and shaft produced from the best material, and exhibiting the very best workmanship. But if there be not present an adequate power to work it—if there be not sufficient water, or sufficient steam, the wondrous mechanism will be a

embarrassing useless thing. The husbandman may put his ground into the very best condition; it may be well weeded, well manured, and sown with the best grain, and yet if there be not a fructifying influence beneath and above the soil which comes alone from heaven, his entire labor will be in vain. And so whatever organisations there may be in the church, and however wisely and energetically those organisations may be framed and worked, they will be of no saving use unless accompanied by the power of God. "Knowledge," as one remarks, "will be an empty name; zeal an idle sound; talent a cumbrous decoration; and eloquence unmeaning verbiage, apart from the Spirit of God."—Apathy will yet continue with those who are ruled by the spirit of the world; formality will yet remain, and become a substitute for the vitality of godliness; backsliders will yet remain, in their alienation from the church; and sinners will yet continue in their sins.—The valley of vision will yet present its bones, very many and very dry; the powers of darkness will yet continue their empire, and multitudes will remain in the shadow of death; the blood of the covenant will be trampled on, and treated as a contemptuous thing; the admonitions of conscience will yet be resisted, and the door of the human heart will be bolted and barred against the admission of Christ's authority and reign. If therefore a revival of pure and undefiled religion is to be produced—if there is to be a reformation in society, and more life and power in the church, it must be done by Him who in the beginning made all things new.

1. *There must be extended and earnest prayer.*

All genuine revivals begin with prayer, that is, with a conviction and confession of our sins as individuals and communities.—They begin with a supplication for mercy, they begin with a recognition of the purity, the authority, the power of God, and his sovereignty over the world and the church. It was thus with the Jews in captivity, and with the Church before the Reformation.—Many a cloister, could it speak, would testify that fervent petitions on behalf of the church had ascended from its precincts. Many a Franciscan, Dominican, and Augustinian cell, could it speak, would testify that within its silent enclosure the heart of many a pious monk had breathed the prayer—"Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord; O Lord, I beseech, send now prosperity!" No one can have read the history of Luther but must have been struck with the frequency and intensity of his prayers. The truth is, the Reformation was produced by prayer; was cradled and nursed by prayer; and by the same mighty agency multiplied its converts and its triumphs. And

thus it is now in the United States of America. The people there of all classes are deeply affected by the personal and national sins, and as a result they assemble in crowds where prayer is wont to be made. Yes, to these meetings, held in theatres, as in regular places of worship, and at noon-day, come all sorts of people, and from all conditions and avocations in life. The merchant from his mart; the tradesman from his counter; the clerk from his desk; the lady from her drawing-room; the maid from her chamber; the mechanic from his bench; the rustic from his field; and the drayman from his wagon—all are found together in the place where prayer is wont to be made. And what is the result? Why, thousands are converted to God, and his promise is ratified: "Prove me now herewith, and see if I will not open to you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to contain it."

2. *But there must be a wider diffusion of the truth as it is in Jesus.*

Though steam, water, or some other adequate motive power is necessary to the working of the machine, yet these sources of power would exist to little purpose, apart from suitable mechanism and instrumentality. The sun and the rain are indispensable to the production of vegetation; and yet we should be sadly off at harvest time if the ground had not been tilled, and the seed deposited in the soil. Whilst we depend on the blessing of God, we would obtain that blessing in conformity with his own arrangement—"He that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully; he that soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly."

There are, then, the labours of the pastor. It is the exposition and application of the truth which God blesses to the conversion of sinners and the edification of saints. It was so in the primitive age, and it has ever been so since. Luther prayed, and also preached; thousands, as they hung upon his lips, were melted into contrition and tears; yea, went away from the sanctuary with new convictions, resolving to throw saints, and relics, and priestly absolutions into the sea of oblivion, and to trust in Christ alone. So when a revival was produced in this country in the eighteenth century, it was brought about instrumentally and chiefly by the preaching of such men as Whitfield and Wesley. Going through the length and breadth of the land, they lifted up their voice like a trumpet, and besought sinners to be reconciled to God.

But if there are the labours of the pastor, there are the labours of the people. God is not confined to instruments, but selects a variety of agents to become his ambassadors to men. The preaching of the gospel was

not the work of apostles only, but such men as Stephen and Philip—deacons of the church at Jerusalem—went forth and preached salvation by Christ. Yea, such men as held no office at all, related to their neighbours and friends the wondrous tale of the cross. It is not necessary that we should receive a college education to preach the gospel, or have laid upon our heads the hands of the presbytery. It is not necessary that we should occupy a pulpit, or have the cognomen “Reverend” attached to our name. We may do without all this, and yet be able to preach the gospel. What is chiefly necessary to this high vocation is to feel this burden of sin, and the awful ruin to which sin exposes us; to be assured that Christ is able and willing to save all who come to him for salvation; that as he has shown the exceeding riches of his grace to me, he is willing to show the same to my neighbour. These are the best credentials for preaching the gospel, and having these, we may go forth into the lanes and streets of the city and entreat men to come to the gospel feast. This is being done by many of the laity in America just now, and is one form in which the revival has developed itself there. Our brethren on the other side of the Atlantic are feeling the powers of the world to come; are convinced that God has a controversy with his people, because they have been so cold, sluggish, and unfaithful as his servants. They see that the world has been gaining on the church; that the spirit of commerce has well-nigh destroyed the spirit of religion; that secularism withstands the advance of Christianity, and the upstart nostrums of men set aside the authoritative revelations of God.—Hence their earnestness in making known the truth as it is in Jesus, and applying it with all power to the hearts and consciences of sinners. Let us do the same, and like results will follow. Be it the work of every British Christian to seek and to save the lost. The sheep have wandered from the fold; like good shepherds let us go after them, and we shall find them. The wreck is on the breakers, let us launch the life-boat of the gospel, and snatch the perishing from the billows and the rocks.—Sinners are going down to the gulf of perdition; let us arrest them in their course, and save them, ere it is too late! Blessed Spirit! Inspire thy people with faith and zeal, and may they feel nothing too much to do or suffer, so that thy cause may be advanced, and thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.—*The Church.*

When shall I come and appear before God! Ps. xiii. 2. When Christ—our life—shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Col. iii. 4.

GOD'S TESTIMONY CONCERNING MAN.

God knows us. He knows what we are; he knows also what he meant us to be; and it is upon the difference between these two states that he founds his testimony concerning us.

He is too loving to say anything needlessly severe; too true to say anything untrue; nor can he have any motive to misrepresent us; for he loves to tell of the good, not of the evil, that may be found in any of the works of his hands. He declared them “good,” “very good,” at first; and if he does not do so now, it is not because he would not, but because he cannot; for “all flesh has corrupted its way upon the earth,” (Gen. vi. 12).

God's testimony concerning man is, that he is a *sinner*. He bears witness against him, not for him, and testifies that “there is none righteous, no, not one;” that there is “none that doeth good;” none “that understandeth;” none that even *seeketh* after God, and still more none that *loveth* him. (Psa. xiv. 1–3; Rom. iii. 10–12.) God speaks of man kindly but severely; as one yearning over a lost child, yet as one who will make no terms with sin, and will “by no means clear the guilty.” He declares man to be a *lost* one, a stray one, a *rebel*, nay a “HATER OF GOD,” (Rom. i. 30); not a sinner occasionally, but a sinner always; not a sinner in part, with many good things about him: but wholly a sinner, with no compensating goodness; evil in heart as well as life, “dead in trespasses and sins,” (Eph. ii. 1); an evil doer, and therefore under condemnation; an enemy of God, and therefore “under wrath;” a breaker of the righteous law, and therefore under “the curse of the law,” (Gal. iii. 10).

Man has fallen! Not this man or that man, but the whole race. In Adam all have sinned; in Adam all have died. It is not that a few leaves have faded or been shaken down, but the tree has become corrupt, root and branch. The “flesh,” or “old man”—that is, each man as he is born into the world, a son of man, a fragment of humanity, a unit in Adam's fall of body,—is “corrupt.” He is not merely brings forth sin, but he carries it about with him, as his second self; nay, he is a *body* or mass of sin (Rom. vi. 6), a “body of

death" (Rom. vii. 24), subject not to the law of God, but to "the law of sin," (Rom. vii. 23). The Jew, educated under the most perfect of laws, and in the most favourable circumstances, was the best type of humanity,—of civilised, polished, educated humanity; the best specimen of the first Adam's sons; yet God's testimony concerning him is that he is "under sin," that he has gone astray, and that he has "come short of the glory of God."

The *outer* life of a man is not *the man*, just as the paint on a piece of timber is not the timber, and as the green moss upon the hard rock is not the rock itself. The picture of a man is not the man; it is but a skilful arrangement of colours which look like the man. So it is the bearing of the soul toward God that is the true state of the man. The man that loves God with all his heart is in a right state; the man that does not love him thus is in a wrong one. He is a sinner; because his heart is not right with God. He may think his life a good one, and others may think the same; but God counts him guilty, worthy of death and hell. The outward good cannot make up for the inward evil. The good deeds done to his fellow-men cannot be set off against his bad thoughts of God. And he must be full of these bad thoughts so long as he does not love this infinitely loveable and infinitely glorious Being with all his strength.

God's testimony then concerning man is, that he does not love God with all his heart; nay, that he does not love him at all. Not to love our neighbour is sin; not to love a parent is greater sin; but not to love God, our divine parent, is greater sin still.

Man need not try to say a good word for himself, or to plead "not guilty," unless he can shew that he loves, and has always loved God with his whole heart and soul. If he can truly say this, he is all right, he is not a sinner, and does not need pardon. He will find his way to the kingdom without the cross and without a Saviour. But, if he cannot say this, "his mouth is stopped," and he is "guilty before God."—However favourably a good outward life may dispose himself and others to look upon his case just now, the verdict will go against him hereafter. This is *man's day*, when man's judgments prevail; but *God's*

day is coming, when the case shall be strictly tried upon its real merits. Then the Judge of all the earth shall do right, and the sinner be put to shame.

There is another and yet worse charge against him. He does not believe on the name of the Son of God, nor love the Christ of God. This is his sin of sins. That his heart is not right with God is the first charge against him. That his heart is not right with the Son of God is the second. And it is this second that is the crowning, crushing sin, carrying with it more terrible damnation than all other sins together. "He that believeth not is condemned already: because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God," (John iii. 18). "He that believeth not, God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record which God gave of his Son," (1 John v. 10). "He that believeth not shall be damned," (Mark xvi. 16). Hence it was that the apostles preached "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," (Acts xx. 21). And hence it is that the first sin which the Holy Spirit brings home to a man is *unbelief*; "when he is come he will reprove the world of sin, because they believe not on me," (John xvi. 8, 9).

Such is God's condemnation of man. Of this the whole Bible is full. That great love of God which his word reveals is based on this condemnation. It is love to the condemned. God's testimony to his own grace has no meaning, save and resting on or taking for granted his testimony to man's guilt and ruin. Nor is it against man as merely a being morally diseased or sadly unfortunate that he testifies; but as guilty of death, under wrath, sentenced to the eternal curse; for that crime of crimes, a heart not right with God, and not true to his Incarnate Son.

This is a divine verdict, not a human one. It is God, not man, who condemns, and God is not a man that he should lie. This is God's testimony concerning man, and we know that this witness is true.

THE WAY TO HEAVEN.

THERE is only one way to Heaven! How important, then, is the question—What is that way? And to whom shall we look for an answer? Men may err respecting

it; for "there is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." [Prov. xiv. 12.]—Let us, then, inquire at once of our *Lord and Saviour himself*. In the 14th chap. of John, 6th verse, he says, "I AM THE WAY: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." And again in the 10th chap. of John, 9th verse, Christ says, "I AM THE DOOR: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved."

Observe, Christ does not say, I am a way, as if there were other ways, but, "I am *the way*"—the *only way*; no one can come unto the Father, or to Heaven, by any other. Christ does not say I am a door, but I am *the door*," that is, the *one and only door* into the fold of God.

Men may tell you the Church is the way, or that baptism is the way, or that the Lord's Supper is the way; but *Christ* tells us that **HE HIMSELF IS THE WAY**.

Thus it is plain that there is but *one way to Heaven*; but blessed be God! *there are many ways to Christ*.

A man may come to Christ in a church or in a chapel, in a cottage or in a barn, in a ship at sea, in a coal mine or in a palace or in a prison.

A man may come to Christ by means of the faithful preaching of a minister of the Church of England, or by that of a Presbyterian, Wesleyan, Independent, or Baptist; by the preaching of a plain unlettered man, or by the ministry of one of great talent and learning.

A man may come to Christ by the private reading of the Scriptures—by means of a Gospel tract, or by the conversation of a Christian friend.

A man may come to Christ more gradually, or more suddenly; his convictions of sin may be very deep, or less pungent and distressing; he may come under the influence of fear, or by the attraction of love.

Blessed be God! there are many *places* in which the Holy Spirit draws souls to Christ, there are those many *ways* in which He draws men to the Saviour; and His gracious operations attend the labors of *ministers of various denominations*: but God usually works most largely by those who most exalt the Saviour, and honour the Holy Spirit.

Listen then to no one who tells you that

you can only reach heaven by attending some particular place of worship, or by observing some particular form or ceremony. You have seen that there is **ONE way to Heaven—the Lord Jesus Christ**; the all important point is that you be found in that way.

Look again at the words of the Lord Jesus. "I am the door; by me, if any man enter in he shall be saved." Mark well! Infant baptism is not the door; adult baptism is not the door; confirmation is not the door; the Lord's Supper is not the door; ministers are not the door; but **CHRIST HIMSELF IS THE DOOR**—He, the Lord of life and glory took upon him our nature, suffered, bled and died on the cross, to be the door—the way of entrance to eternal life.

"**BY ME**," Christ says, "*if any man enter in he shall be saved*."

"**ANY MAN**"—Churchman or dissenter—rich or poor—learned or ignorant.

"*Any man*"—whatever his former character—how many-soever his sins—how ever hard his heart, if he enter by the door—if he truly come to Christ, he shall be saved.

"**HE SHALL BE SAVED**"—his sins shall be pardoned, his heart shall be renewed; he shall be delivered from the wrath to come; he shall be yet free from the love, power and dominion of sin; he shall be brought safe home to heaven—to perfect happiness—to **ETERNAL GLORY!**

Beloved Reader, have you entered by **THE DOOR** into the true fold of God?

I do not ask whether you have been baptized or confirmed; whether you have partaken of the Lord's Supper; whether you are a member of the Church of England, or a member of any other Church? *But, have you entered by Christ into the true fold of God?* Have you come as a poor, guilty, helpless sinner to the Saviour? Are you convinced of the sin and folly of attempting to enter heaven by any other door than Christ? Does your soul depend *only* on the person and work of Jesus for pardon, for acceptance, and eternal life?

If you have not entered by "**THE DOOR**," you are not a sheep of Christ's fold.

Let me entreat you to beware of resting

in forms or ceremonies, on a profession of religion, or on membership with any visible church whatever.

If you are *in* "THE WAY" to heaven you are "IN CHRIST;" and "if any man be *in Christ*, he is a new creature;" he is "born of the Spirit;" he breathes the breath of prayer; he desires "the sincere milk of the word, that he may grow thereby;" his affections are set on things above; he is led, not in word only, but in deed and in truth, to renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh.

If you are conscious that at present you are not saved—that your sins are not pardoned—that your heart is not changed, consider once more the words of Jesus:—*I am the door; by me if any man enter in he shall be saved.*" Come then to Jesus. He is ready to receive you. He laid down his life for sinners. He shed his blood for enemies. Come then to him for *you are welcome*, whoever you are—however hard your heart—however old you may have grown in sin. Come! for Christ hath said, Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." Come *at once*; for he hath said, "Now is the accepted time, *now is the day of salvation.*" Do you ask how you must come? *Come just as you are:*

"If you tarry till you're better,
You will never come at all."

Come as a guilty sinner, remembering that if you be not pardoned, you must perish. Come trusting in the power of that blood that can cleanse from all sin. Come with prayer, crying, "Lord, save or I perish;" "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Lay the whole weight of your troubled soul upon Jesus, as "the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."—Let him be your only trust, and you will never be confounded; "for God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii. 16.)

My soul thirsteth for God—for the living God. Ps. xlii. 2. Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty. Isa. xxxiii. 17.

A CHILD PREACHER.

Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings God has ordained praise. And as a little Jewish maid could tell Naaman how he might be healed of his leprosy, when the monarch of Israel had no knowledge of the prophet who was able to effect the cure, so many little ones can point unbelievers to the Saviour, who is able to save all who come to him. Here is an instance of the power of such child preachers:

A minister in one of our large cities had prepared and preached, as he supposed, a most convincing sermon for the benefit of an influential member of his congregation, who was known to be of an infidel turn of mind. The sinner listened unmoved to the well turned sentences and the earnest appeals; his heart was unaffected. On his return from church, he saw a tear trembling in the eye of his little daughter, whom he tenderly loved; and he inquired the cause. The child informed him that she was thinking of what her Sunday School teacher had told her of Jesus Christ.

"And what did she tell you of Jesus Christ, my child?" he asked.

"Why, she said He came down from heaven and died for poor me." and in a moment the tears gushed from eyes which had looked upon the beauties of only seven summers, as, in the simplicity of childhood, she added, "Father, should I not love One who has so loved me?"

The proud heart of the infidel was touched. What the eloquent plea of his minister could not accomplish, the tender sentence of his child had done, and he retired to give vent to his own feelings in a silent but penitent prayer. That evening found him at the praying circle, where, with brokenness of spirit, he asked the prayers of God's people. In giving an account of his Christian experience, he remarked,—*"Under God I owe my conversion to a little child, who first convinced me by her artless simplicity that I ought to love One who had so loved me."*

The minister, on returning from this meeting, took his sermon and read it over carefully, and said to his family and to himself; "There is not enough of Jesus Christ in this discourse."—*American.*

THE GOOD NEWS.

JUNE 1st, 1863.

The Boldness of the Christian:

The Christian is bold as a lion. This animal so well known for boldness and courage never flies from the hunters, nor is frightened by their onset, and if superior strength should force him to yield; he does so fighting and with his face to the foe.— There is no cowardice in him. So it is with the Christian. He is bold as a lion. The guilt of a broken law has been removed and that gives him peace with God. God is his friend, his strength, his shield and his buckler; and who can effectually prove a foe? "He says with the Psalmist, "The Lord is the strength of my life of whom shall I be afraid. Though an host should encamp against me my heart shall not fear. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people that have set themselves against me round about. Yea I will not fear though the earth be removed and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." Look at the boldness of Moses, though he occupied a prominent place near the Egyptian throne, and was subject to death for defection; he forsook Egypt not fearing the wrath of the King, for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible.— Look at Caleb and Joshua who stood firm as rocks on the sea-beach when the billows of a nation's murmuring were lashing around them, and threatened to overwhelm them. Look at Elijah who dared alone to face the ferocious and wicked king Ahab, to tell him to his teeth, that he was the troubler of Israel, because he had forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and had followed Balaam. Look at Shadrach Meshach and Abednego, who feared not the furious autocrat of Babylon, nor the heat of his fiery furnace, but boldly, said they were not careful to answer the

king on the matter he required: Look at Peter, and John, who though they were unlettered men, boldly preached in presence of their enemies; that they had been with Christ. Look at the chief of the Apostles, who spoke boldly before the Roman governor, and afterwards witnessed a good confession before Nero himself. Look in later times to Luther, the great champion of the Reformation, who alone, clad as a simple monk, stood his ground undaunted before the glittering grandeur of nobles, princes, and potentates, and feared not the face of man; and when ye see these noble men exemplifying a courage that is more than human, standing alone amidst a forest of foes, then is it not true that the Christian is bold as a lion?

A CHRISTIAN NOBLE.

Christianity gives to men true nobility, and no man has true nobility without it. He may be counted a noble from heritage, or from rank, or from valorous deeds; but no man has true nobility except the man who has been begotten again through the word of God, who has been made an heir, who is called a son, and who performs actions of a Godlike character. In these respects all God's children are equally noble. They think noble thoughts, do noble actions, and look forward to a noble inheritance. But while this is the case, when an earthly noble is converted to christianity if he is not more noble than his brothers and sisters in the Lord, he is sure to be more useful. The sun, the moon, and the stars would not be so useful if they were nearer the earth. It is because their light is high that they are seen farther up, and as it is with them, so with the rich and the noble. They are set by God in lofty places to lighten the darker homes of men by their deeds of loving sympathy. And when they are faithful to their charge,— when they feel their responsibility and

make their light to shine before their fellow men, then their nobility of station, and their nobility of christianity, shining together, make them a pleasant light.

PICTURES FOR THE CHILDREN.

THE BOY JESUS.

Twelve summers have twelve times carpeted, with green, Bethlehem's plains, since angels were heard singing there. And the babe of which they sung, is now a ruddy boy, a favorite with God and man. But there is little appearance of a crown encircling his brow, or his hand ever grasping a sceptre. Born in poverty, the children of the poor are his companions. He is just like other boys, in every respect but one. He is never naughty. Did the boys of Nazareth ever take God's name in vain? One thing certain, Joseph's son did not.—Boys often tell lies, but there was one boy, who never swerved from the truth. It was the boy Jesus. He was altogether a singular boy. Behold him in the streets of Nazareth, amongst the children, beloved by all. And, at many a fireside, methinks I hear the little ones telling of his merits, and how they loved him. They had often been vexed with others, but never with Jesus—the village favorite. It signifies not where you find him, you never find him in mischief. He is ever the same mild and inoffensive one. The birds, sitting among the fig and olive trees, singing their loves, on the hill sides of Nazareth, fear no stone from his hand. When the vintage lacked its clusters, and did not fill the wine press up to the husbandman's expectations, he never once suspected the carpenter's son. Mary his mother might have her trials, and troubles, and who has not? But she had none because of the disobedience of her son. No sulky looks ever hung upon his boyish brows. The lawful demands of his parents were never repelled by that disgraceful

“No,” which children have so often ready at hand. No Evangelist tells us that he was a praying child. But who doubts it? Would he who spent whole nights in prayer; in after life, neglect it in youth? In everything he was our ensample, and had we been inmates of his humble home, we would often have seen him reverently upon his knees. Like Timothy he knew the scriptures from a child. The Law, the Prophets and the Psalms were his frequent study, and in which his soul delighted.—They were to him as a heavenly mirror, in which he could see himself standing out in bold relief, with all the rays of old Testament light centering around him. The Sabbath, when it came round, found him in the Synagogue, an eager listener, but not always coinciding with the hazy teachings of its rulers. Such is a picture of Jesus at home, and go with him to Jerusalem, and you see the same wonderful boy, unchanged amid the splendour of the capital. The feast of the passover is drawing near, and according to the Mosaic law he must go up to Jerusalem, for he has reached the age of twelve, and he must now present himself in the temple, as one subject to the law. Mary, like a true hearted mother, accompanies her son on so auspicious an occasion. This eventful period had been looked forward to by Jesus, in common with other Jewish boys, with great delight. The morning of their departure has arrived. And a little company outside the town is assembled, and now on the march. How joyous they all are, especially those who are going up to the city of the Great King, for the first time, while their younger brothers, with tears in their eyes, wish they had been but a little older, that they might go too! But let us follow the favored ones, who are bearing palm-tree branches in their hands, and singing as they go. One strikes up, and now all join

“I joy'd when to the house of God,
Go up, they said to me.

Jerusalem within thy gates
 Our feet shall standing be.
 Jerusalem as a city, is
 Compactly built together:
 Unto that place the tribes go up,
 The tribes of God go thither."

The company swells larger, and larger, at every cross-way, and the great multitude is now within sight of Zion's battlements. See how the children clap their hands, and shout in admiration, as they gaze upon it, from the brow of Olivet.—Crowds have come out to welcome them in. The town entered, and the passover celebrated with pomp, the crowds are now beginning to wend their way homewards. Some loiter behind to see the beauties, and curiosities of the city, and to view the Roman soldiers drilled, by the First Prefect Cyrenius. The Nazareth party is away, and has encamped by the road side for the night. By the bright moonlight a father, and a mother,—Joseph and Mary may be seen, with distracted looks, going from tent to tent, with the questions, "Is our son here?" "Have ye seen anything of our boy?" They find him not—and after a sleepless night, they, at break of day retrace their steps to Jerusalem, where, after no little search, they find him, but not where we would expect to find a lost boy, in a city. When they discovered him, it was not standing gazing at some rich pile of architecture, nor lounging idly, with other youths, at a street corner. They found him in one of the porches of the temple, the great seat of religion, and learning, listening to the doctors of the day, and astonishing them with his interrogations and answers. The by-standers are amazed at him, for never boy spake like this boy. His mother glad to see him anywhere, rejoiced to find him where he was. An opportunity presenting itself, she expresses her surprise at his conduct. "Son," she says, "why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold thy Father and I

have sought thee sorrowing." Jesus replies, "How is it that ye sought me?—Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" As much as if he had said, "Why did ye pain yourselves concerning me? Surely you knew me better than to imagine that I would be in wicked company, ye never yet saw me associate with such. Although I am your son, you do not understand me yet. Did ye not know that this is my home, as well as Nazareth, and that if not with you I would be here, in my heavenly Father's house? Did ye not know that the best place to find a lost Saviour is in the house of God, and that they who seek him there shall assuredly find him?"

X. Y. Z.

A GOOD MAXIM.

An apostle tells us that "some persons are ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." They never seem to be quite certain about anything in the Holy Scriptures. If they are learning all things, they hold fast to nothing. A very uncomfortable state of mind, and as dangerous as uncomfortable. There is such a thing as truth in distinction from error, and by study and prayer we can arrive at it; and this it is our duty to do, and then not to allow our minds to be open to assaults. Richard Cecil once said:—"I have a shelf in my library for tried and proved authors. When I have read a book and found it really valuable I put it on that shelf; and though I may hear it strongly spoken against, there it remains. In the same way I have a shelf in my mind for proved opinions. When I have thoroughly investigated a subject, and have reached a definite conclusion, I put it on that shelf I may afterwards hear it called in question, and I may not be able at once to rebut the arguments by which it is assailed; nevertheless I do not take it down. There it remains."

TO SINNERS.

The flying years are shuttles weaving the woof of your sins into the warp of your existence here, and the loom of time will soon have finished the web of your destiny hereafter. You are making a criminal of yourself at the bar of God, and a convict for the dungeon of "outer darkness," by wearing your garments stripped with your own iniquities. It is the woof that gives coloring to the web. It is your deeds that are fixing your destiny. Dye what is woven in the blood of Christ, and you will be astonished and wonder at its efficacy to cleanse from sin, and the purity of your raiment—white linen—which is the righteousness of saints. Then in your experience will be fulfilled the promise—"Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Sin prepares the soul for abysses of darkness, and the blood of Jesus for a throne of light. Death will soon cut the threads of your life, and you will be taken up to the world of rapture or drawn down to the world of woe. Which shall it be? You have postponed a decision now quite too long.—The Judge is at the door. Now is the day of salvation.

HOW? AND HOW MUCH?

A WORD ON GIVING.

A minister closed his address to an assembly thus:—"There is no explicit, uniform, universal rule in the New Testament for giving to God. A Patriarch gave a tenth. A Jew about *two tenths*. Zaccheus would give the *half* of his goods. Many of the Christians at Pentecost gave their *all*. Every man is left at liberty to take his grade and rank of Christian nobility and generosity; and that remains his position and rank for ever.

A minister went away fired with the sentiment, and resolved to let it influence his life and ministry. He presently met a friend, and exhorted him to large hearted liberality, dwelling much on the blessed privilege of giving to the Lord.—Meeting him afterwards, he asked if he had acted on his advice. His friend replied that "when about to present his

offering to God, he felt it was not large enough. He then doubled it; but feeling that it was still too small, he doubled it again; and then he gave to God with joy."

True, there is no exact, uniform, universal measure for giving—as a *twentieth*, a *tenth*, a *fifth*, a *half*, or any other proportion, to which all must conform. The Gospel does not bind its converts by stern, uniform rule. It leaves them at liberty to decide for themselves. Yet is there liberty, not the liberty of license to do nothing, but the liberty of intelligent decision and grateful love. It is liberty to give "as God hath prospered," and for each to act "as he purposeth in his heart."

With those who truly live for God themselves, and who devote their possessions to His glory, the sentiment, "All belongs to God—why ask a proportion for Him?" is the very natural and beautiful reply when proportionate giving is urged. The Christian ought, indeed, to acknowledge that all he has, the Lord has intrusted to him; but precept needs to be reduced to practice. Selfishness is continually acting upon him; and, therefore, a substantial proportion of his income ought to be first and certainly devoted to the Lord.

Let the Christian reader, then consider his infinite obligations to the love of Christ in redeeming him from sin and destruction.

Let him reflect on the Saviour's claims on the devotedness of his whole heart, and on every power and faculty he possesses.

Let him seriously weigh the urgent necessities of millions of men calling for his compassionate sympathy and largest aid, during his one brief, mortal life.

Let him solemnly determine whether he will live for self-indulgence, as a child of earth; or whether, as a follower of Christ he will forego present enjoyment for the eternal welfare of men, and the glory of Christ.

Christian Reader, you cannot but admire the spirit of the noble apostle—"The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they who live *should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that*

died for them, and rose again." (2 Cor. v. 14, 15.)

Let your admiration, then, kindle into imitation! May you be found a faithful steward! Consider it your greatest privilege to be able to give to the Lord. And let your giving be, not from a momentary impulse, but from a *fixed abiding purpose*. Lay by periodically a proportion of your income for the Lord—Scripture says *weekly*, "as God hath prospered you."—(See 1 Cor. xvi. 2.) "God loveth a cheerful giver." (Cor. ix. 7.)

BARRENNESS OF PALESTINE.

Skeptical writers sometimes question the credibility of the Old Testament, because it gives such glowing accounts of the fertility of Palestine, while the present condition of that country is barren and unproductive. But wiser observers, while admitting the striking contrast between former and more recent times, find a sufficient explanation in changes produced by man himself. The following paragraph is full of important information:

Dr. Unger, the well known naturalist of Vienna, has published an account of the scientific result of two journeys which he undertook in 1858 and 1860, into Greece and the Ionian Islands. He devoted himself entirely to the botany of the country through which he passed, including an inquiry into the fossil Flora of Euboea. The distinctive characters of the most remarkable new species that he found are delineated by the system of nature printing which is a good deal used on the continent. He closes the work with an interesting chapter on the question whether, from a physical point of view, there is in Greece and the East a capacity for returning to its ancient prosperity. By a full comparison of ancient accounts with present facts, he arrives at the conclusion that there has been no essential change in the physical condition of the country. But there is a very serious accidental change. So far as the mere forces of nature go, there is no-

thing to hinder Greece, Palestine, and Asia Minor from returning to their old fertility. It has been destroyed by man, and the wholesale destruction of the wood has been the sole cause of the barrenness with which those countries have been smitten. The vast wood-fires, kindled by the hordes of invaders, who in the course of centuries, have followed each other upon that soil, as also by the shepherds to gain fresh pastures, have gradually deprived the climate of its moisture, and the ground of its fertility. The instrument by which the barrenness of those regions is perpetuated, is still more insignificant than its original cause. It is the goat. The ordinary operations of nature would, in the course of time, restore the woods that have been destroyed but for the large number of goats the scanty population maintains.—These have no pasture to live on in summer, for the arid climate dries it up, and they consequently eat off the shoots of trees just springing out of the ground.—But if, by the operation of any causes, the woods were ever suffered to grow again, Dr Unger's view is that fertility would return, and the old prosperity of the East would be restored.

POWER OF EARNESTNESS.

A Christian student in a New England college had fallen into a cold and barren state, and lost all living interest in spiritual things. At length God's Spirit touched his heart and he woke from his long dream. Full of bitter remorse for his negligences, he began at once a reform. He felt constrained to make a confession of his unfaithfulness to his room-mate, who was not a Christian. When he began to speak his utterance was choked by sobs, and he was able to articulate only a few words. They were effectual, however, as a proof of his deep feeling, and went at once to the heart of his room-mate, and led to his conversion. One of the New England papers gives the following incident of a similar character, told at the noon-day meeting:

Rev. Mr. Hatt referred to a Baptist minister, formerly of New York, who, reflecting one night upon the fact that not one of his large family was converted, found his feelings insupportable. He arose from

his pillow, kindled his fire, went from bed to bed, awakening his children, saying, "Get up, my dear children, your father is in distress." Hastily they arose, dressed themselves, and gathered around him at the fireside, when he arose and with weeping eyes and burning heart, said to them, in substance, "My dear children, I have preached the gospel, and I think faithfully, to the great congregation, for these many years, and have performed my pastoral duties among the families of my people, but I have never taken you by the hand and spoken to you individually the words of life, have never inquired of you the state of your hearts, and pressed you to the feet of the Saviour. I cannot endure the thought of my unfaithfulness. I ask you, my dear children, will you forgive your father this fearful neglect?"

The children were all at once broken down, and said, as with one voice, "Don't weep, father, so; do not talk thus; you will break our hearts. It is we who should make confession, not you. You have done your duty, preached to us, read the Scripture to us, prayed daily with us and for us, and lived and breathed the Gospel among us. We have known our duty and have been impenitent." At once the religious state of the family was altered, and three of the sons are now ministers of the Gospel.

GOD RECONCILED IN CHRIST.

When you look through a red glass, the whole heavens appear bloody, but through pure, uncoloured glass you receive the clear light that is refreshing and comfortable to behold. When sin unpardoned is between, and we look on God through that, we can perceive nothing but anger and enmity in his countenance; but make Christ our glorious Redeemer, the medium, and through him as clear transparent glass, the beams of God's favourable countenance shine in upon the soul. The Father cannot look upon his well-beloved Son but graciously and pleasingly. God looks on us out of Christ, sees us rebels, and fit to be condemned; we look on God as being just and powerful, to punish us; but when Christ is between, God looks on us in him justified, and we look on God in him as pacified, and see the smiles of his favourable countenance. Take Christ out, all is terrible; interpose him, all is full of peace.—*Leighton.*

JOINED TO THE LORD.

AMBASSADORS are sometimes sent to contract marriages for royal persons with those whom they would affiance. We are ambassadors for Christ; and the great object of Christian ministers should be to join their hearers to him. In seeking to do this, a preacher once used these words for his text: "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thy people and thy father's house. So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty; for he is thy Lord, and worship thou him." This invitation to receive the Saviour's love was accepted by one of the congregation, and, so far as the preacher has ever learned, by only one of them at that time. There was one whom the Saviour did then espouse as though he did greatly desire her beauty. That individual was the only colored person in the congregation—a half breed Indian. When she was examined for admission to the church, the pastor said: "What is your greatest desire?" She thought a moment, turned her eyes suffused with tears upon him, and said in broken speech, "O, sir, to be joined to Christ!"—*Dr. Adams.*

THE CARE OF OUR THOUGHTS.

A care of our thoughts is the greatest preservative against actual sins. It is a most certain truth that the greatest sin that ever was committed was at first but a thought. The foulest wickedness, the most monstrous impiety, arose from so small peck as a first thought may be resembled a to. The most horrid thing that ever was done, as well as the most noble and virtuous action that ever was accomplished, had no greater beginning. Of such a quick growth and spreading nature is sin, that it rivals even the kingdom of heaven, which our Lord telleth us "is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field; which indeed is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown up (in those countries), it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." (Matth. xiii. 31). The apostle James (i. 13-15) represents it by a simile of another nature. "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God

cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth any man, but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin bringeth forth death." It is conceived, bred, lives, and grows in a man, till at last it holds him in perpetual subjection, and "reigns in his mortal body" (Rom. vi. 12.) And therefore it is absolutely necessary that we govern and manage our thoughts, without which it will be impossible that we should avoid falling into divers sins; and as we may be tempted to commit even the greatest sins, we must carefully watch against the beginnings, if we hope to avoid the last degrees of evil.—*Church of Scotland Record.*

KEEP THY HEART.

A reigning error, among all those who profess Christianity is, that we care more for that which is without, than that which is within.—And even when we seem to seek inward reformation, we begin too frequently with the stream instead of the fountain, the external rather than the internal. It is a great moment in any Christian's life, when he awakes to the conviction, that of all the works he has to perform, the greatest is within his own breast. Even if it had no fruit outwardly, this culture would be momentous in regard to eternity; but indeed it is the very germ of all fruitfulness. "Keep thy heart with all thy diligence," &c. Ministers and people may give themselves too exclusively to visible activity, and then the lamentation is in place, "They made me keeper of the vineyards, but mine own vineyard have I not kept." This arises from low thoughts of the work of God within the soul. "Did not he that made that which is without, make that which is within also?" Nay, did he not rather make that which is within? Is it not this, on which his eye is chiefly fixed? The humblest thoughts of ourselves are consistent with a profound reverence for the spiritual influence within our bosoms. It is a great and awful fact, that the Holy Spirit inhabits the believer. "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?" If this internal work be neglected, poverty will come upon all our Christian life. The noise and bustling vanity of the age tend directly toward such disregard. It must be opposed by renewed diligence in cultivating deep, inward, spiritual religion. We must not measure our attainments in piety, by palatable usefulness, or the stir of beneficent action, however much this is our duty. The

grand affair of life is the building up of the spiritual temple. We may disparage the power operating within. It is the common mistake of retired and suffering Christians. Because they are not called to public manifestations, they think there is no advancement. But knowledge may be rising in a compact and solid structure. Faith may be diffusing its mighty influence on every side. Holy devotion may be sending up clouds of incense, acceptable to God. Intercessory prayer may be stretching its arms of love, to take in all the brotherhood of Christ and all the family of man. Appetite and passion may be dying, by repeated blows. Purity, like that of Jesus may be arising as a picture on the soul's tablet, dim perhaps, but brightening. Patience may be approaching to its perfect work. Submission to God's chastening hand may be gaining strength in the furnace. The world may be waning, and the attraction of heaven waxing more luminous. Joy in the Lord may be like the fragrance of a field which God hath blessed. And gentle humility, the ornament and preservative of all graces, may be growing more constant. Is all this nothing? Is it not the very process to which our Master calls us? It is he that maketh that which is within. Such reflections are needful for many a solitary believer, who sighs to think that no opportunity is given for great deeds in God's behalf. "They also serve, who stand and wait." There is growth in the world of vegetable nature, not only during sunshine, but in the night. There may be progress, even where there is no joy. The roots may be striking downwards into the soil, and the vital juices of the stock may be maturing, while the late coloured flowers are folded in pensive weakness and weeping with night-dews. Inward, inward must we go, for the true elaboration of gracious virtues. Let this be strongly impressed on those whose circle is bounded by the walls of a narrow home. Let the poor mother, whose dependent charge binds her all day long to the domestic service; let the widow, who cherishes her faith amidst complete insulation; let the bereaved lonely one, whom the world has dropped from its catalogue; let the invalid, who is cut off from all social labour; let the aged who wonders why a useless life is lengthened out, know and believe, that to them also it is granted to glorify God as truly as to the king or the apostle. Let them cease to measure the work of grace by the external standard of human activity. Did not he that made that which is without make that which is within also?—*Dr. J. W. Alexander.*

In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

THE MOMENTOUS PROMISE.

A few months since, while the Spirit of God was moving upon the people of B—, a faithful servant of Christ spoke with a young man, who, boasting of his Universalism, had declared with an oath that if addressed by him on religion he would assault with personal violence this very friend of his soul. But the Lord had gone before the earthly messenger, and the youth reluctantly promised to spend ten minutes in prayer upon returning to his room that evening. When alone with God, his solemn promise was repeated by an awakening promise in his spirit's ear. To redeem it, as he afterwards declared, he fell upon his knees, and when he rose his heart had a burden it had never borne before. The next day a young convert called at his house, and faithfully pointing him to the Lamb of God, offered him a Bible.

'No,' said D., 'I want to buy one myself; I've fifty cents due me for wages.'

With his money in hand, he was soon on his way to the village, not far distant, to purchase the Word of God; when a siren voice whispered, get a song book.— He hesitated, for he was to spend lonely weeks in the forest, and the tempter would kindly have him provide the cheer of careless mirth; a moment full of awful interest passed, and the celestial treasure was his own. He entered the solitude, resolved to make the Bible his study and guide.— Among wicked companions, his purpose was, ere long, tried, but was unshaken. Upon his return to a place of prayer, his full heart overflowed with love, hope, and joy, and he rose to declare what God had done for his soul. He was followed by one who had for some time indulged a hope in Christ, and whose words were these; 'I feel condemned; I've not before spoken for Jesus; I, who all my life have been instructed in Bible truths by pious parents and teachers; and now to hear D— speak, who has not enjoyed such means of grace, and the last time I saw him, a few weeks ago, his mouth was full of oaths—I can no longer keep silence.

How momentous that promise, almost thoughtlessly given, to spend ten minutes of a hitherto wasted life in prayer—momentous to him and to others.

A great point is gained with a human

soul when a decision to move toward God is made; a commitment to the work of personal salvation. To saint and sinner, the lesson of such experience is impressive and awakening, and verifies the voice of Jehovah, saying, 'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you to will and to do, of his good pleasure.'—*Ch. Chronicle.*

AN ADVERTISEMENT OF A LOST DAY.

Lost! lost! lost!

A gem of countless price,
Cut from the living rock,
And grav'd in Paradise;
Set round with three times eight,
Large diamonds, clear and bright,
And each with sixty smaller ones,
All changeful as the light.

Lost—where the countless throng
In Fashion's mazes wind,
Where trilleth Folly's song,
Leaving a sting behind;
Yet to my hand 'twas given,
A golden harp to buy,
Such as the white-robed choir attune
To deathless minstrelsy.

Lost! lost! lost!
I feel all search is vain;
That gem of countless cost
Can ne'er be mine again;
I offer no reward,
For till these heart strings sever,
I know that Heaven's entrusted gift
Is left away for ever.

But when the sea and land
Like burning scrolls have fled,
I'll see it in His hand,
Who judgeth quick and dead;
And when of scath and loss
That man can ne'er repair,
The dread inquiry meets my soul,
"What shall it answer there?"

PRAYERLESS PARENTS.

Prayerless parents! Your irreligion may prove your children's ruin. They might have been within the fold of the Saviour by this time, had not you hindered them when entering in.

when God visited your family with a heavy stroke, they were thoughtful for a season, but there was no church in your house to give a heavenly direction to that thoughtfulness, and it soon died away. That evening, when they came home from the Sabbath-school, so serious, if you had been a pious father or mother, you would have taken your boy aside, and spoken tenderly to him, and asked what his teacher had been telling him, and you would have prayed with him and tried to deepen the impression. But your children came in from the church or school and found no church in their father's house. Their hearts were softened, but your worldliness soon hardened them. The seed of the kingdom was just springing in their souls, and by this time might have been a rich harvest of salvation; but in the atmosphere of your ungodly house the tender blade withered instantly. Your idle talk, your frivolity, your Sunday visitors, your prayerless evenings ruined all.

Your children were coming to Christ, and you suffered them not. And you will not need to hinder them long. The carnal mind is enmity against God; but no enmity so deep as theirs who were almost reconciled and then drew back. You drove your children back. You hardened them. They may never more be moved. They may grow up as prayerless and ungodly as yourself. If God should change yourself, they may soon be too hard for your own tears and entreaties. If you die as you are, their evil works will follow you to the world of woe, and pour new ingredients into your own cup of wrath. Oh! think of these things. A prayerless house is not only a cheerless one, but it is a guilty one; for where God is not, there Satan is.

THUNDER-STORM ON THE MEDITERRANEAN.

"The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; the God of glory thundereth: the Lord is upon many waters."—Psa. xxix. 3.

Dr. James Hamilton, in his lecture on the Literary Attractions of the Bible, has the following beautiful remarks on the geographical structure of this Psalm:—

There is no phenomenon in nature so awful as a thunder-storm; and almost

every poet, from Homer and Virgil down to Dante and Milton, or rather down to Crabbe and Pollok, has described it. In the Bible, too, we have a thunder-storm—the 29th Psalm—the description of a tempest, which, rising from the Mediterranean, and travelling by Lebanon, and along the inland mountains, reaches Jerusalem, and sends the people into the temple porticoes for refuge. And besides those touches of terror in which the geographical progress of the tornado is described, it derives a sacred vitality and power from the presence of Jehovah in each successive peal.

'The voice of the Lord is on the sea:
The God of glory thundereth: the Lord is
on the mighty sea.

The voice of the Lord is powerful, the
voice of the Lord is full of majesty.

The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars;
Yea, the Lord breaketh the cedars of Le-
banon.

He maketh them also to skip like a calf:
Lebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn.
The voice of the Lord divideth the flames
of fire.

The voice of the Lord shaketh the wilder-
ness:

The Lord shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh.
The voice of the Lord maketh the hinds
to calve, and discovereth the forests;
And in His temple doth every one speak
of His glory.

The Lord sitteth upon the water-torrent;
yea, the Lord sitteth King forever.
'The Lord will give strength unto His peo-
ple.'

(and now the sun shines out again;)

'The Lord will bless His people with peace.'

"Over many of the Psalms it sheds a flood of new significance when the reader understands their mechanism, as in the case of many it has been disclosed by the labours of Lowth, Horsley, Hengstenberg, and others. It was one happy morning, in his house at Duudee, that my dear friend, Robert McCheyne, showed me the geographical structure of this 29th Psalm. And certainly it enhances the meaning of this majestic ode when we conceive spectator-psalmist as standing with the awe-struck multitude in the temple porch, and watching the march of the thunder-storm as it advances from the Mediterranean or 'mighty' sea, and at last bursts into a water-flood around themselves."

Sabbath School Lessons.

June 7th, 1863.

THE BRAZEN SERPENT,—Numb.
xxi. 4-9.

I.—THE PLAGUE.

Much discouraged. This was the second time they were turned back from the very borders of the promised land. Their disappointment must have been very bitter, as they had now been wandering for thirty-eight years. *They spake against God and Moses.* Notwithstanding of all the goodness they had experienced, all the trials they had undergone, they had not yet learned submission. Nothing but God's Spirit can change the heart. They had just been favoured with a victory over some Canaanites; but this success was soon forgotten. Aaron who was wont to share his brother's burden was now in heaven. They complain of want of bread and water, though they had the manna from heaven, and were probably followed by the water from the rock. *Fiery serpents.* Flying serpents, called fiery from their colour, or from the burning sensation caused by their bite, which was fatal.

II.—THE CURE.

We have sinned. Pain and death convinced them; but like Pharaoh, they dreaded the punishment of sin, but not sin itself. *Moses prayed for the people.* The Lord gave them a cure, but still left the plague among them, to humble them and bring them to repentance. *Serpent of brass.* This serpent was a beautiful and lively image of the Saviour. The cure was devised by God himself, in like manner as he only originated the plan of man's salvation through a Redeemer. As the serpent was lifted up, so was the Saviour lifted up on the cross, *Jno. iii. 14.* Christ is also held up to the gaze of sinners in his preached gospel. Whoever looked at the serpent was healed; there was no distinction of age, rank, or sex. So also the gospel invitation is universal. All are invited to look to Jesus and live. And how expressive is the bodily act of looking of that mental act of faith which unites the sinner to Christ.

Learn 1. *Never to murmur against God.* How ungrateful and unreasonable do the complaints of the Israelites appear to us, acquainted as we are, with the history of their wanderings! And no less absurd do our murmurings against our heavenly Father, appear to the holy angels, and they shall ultimately do so to ourselves, when the Lord has accomplished all the good pleasure of his goodness concerning us.

2. *The sin and danger of backsliding.*—

The murmurers obtained not the pleasures for which they repined, and forfeited their present and promised blessings, "much people of Israel died." So it is with those who forsake Christ for the world; they enjoy neither the pleasures of sin nor of holiness.

3. *The sinfulness of the natural heart.*—The Israelites doubted God's goodness, "wherefore," &c. They forgot past, despised present, and rejected future mercies, preferring the bread and bondage of Egypt. Your heart was, or is, like this.

4. *Our need of an Intercessor.* Guilty Israel felt that they were unfit to approach God themselves. They entreated Moses to pray for them. We too require a Mediator. Have you an interest in Christ's intercession?

5. *How simple the way of salvation!* The wounded had but to look and they were healed. And it is simply by looking to Jesus that the sinner is saved, *Isa. xlv. 22.*

June, 14th, 1863.

A BLIND MAN HEALED.

MARK VIII. 22-26.

1.—THE BLIND MAN BROUGHT TO CHRIST.

They bring a blind man unto him.—No anxiety seems to have been manifested by the blind man himself. He did not even pray for himself. His friends, however, evidently believed that Christ had power to restore his sight. O, that believers were equally earnest in laying the case of their friends, who are in spiritual darkness, before the gracious Saviour!

2. HIS SIGHT IS RESTORED.

He took the blind man by the hand.—Never had the poor, blind man so kind a leader.—The means employed were probably in pity for the weakness of the man, to strengthen his faith. *Men as trees*—from this expression, it is probable, that the man was not born blind, but had lost his sight. Mark the similarity between his cure and that of the spiritually blind; both are gradual.

Learn 1. *That we should pray for our friends, though they may not pray for themselves.* This man did not seem so earnest in his application to Christ as others were. His silence would almost lead us to suppose that he had no great expectation of being cured. But his friends prayed for him and their prayer was granted.

2. *The condescension of Christ.* "He took the blind man by the hand." Though Lord of all he did not think this work beneath him. In spiritual matters we are all naturally blind. Seek Christ's guidance. Unless he

leads you by the hand, you will go far astray.

3. *That the Lord employs diverse means for accomplishing the same end.* In the case of Blind Bartimeus, Jesus but spake the word, and the cure was effected. Here, however, there was the interposition of means; but the result was the same. So in conversion, or the cure of spiritual blindness, the means employed is the word; but the ways, in which the Spirit applies that word to the sinner's heart and conscience, are various.

4. *The restoration of Spiritual sight is generally gradual.* As in the works of nature, so is it in the works of grace. The law is "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." As the believer advances, the things, of which faith is the evidence, become more real, more distinct.

6. *Beware of despising gospel privileges.* The inhabitants of Bethsaida had lightly esteemed the Saviour. The miracle was therefore performed without their town, and the man was forbidden to give them the intelligence of it. If we do not improve the means of grace, our candle may be speedily removed.

CHARACTER IS EVERYTHING.

In a house in which I am well acquainted there was a servant, who was a regular jack-of-all-trades. He was the cleverest fellow about the house and premises that ever was. The establishment was a small one, and it makes all the difference in the world in small establishments whether the one man has a handy set of fingers or whether he is all thumbs. Richard Phillips had handy fingers, and no mistake. He cleaned the horse, and milked the cow, and fed the pigs and chickens. If a job had to be done indoors, he used to do it. By Richard were the winter curtains taken down and the muslin ones put into their place. He took up the carpets, beat them and put them down again. There was, I think, no available carpenter in the village, and as long as Richard remained in his situation the loss was little felt. He used to brew the beer, and to stow away the wine. He could take a turn at the mangle when he had nothing else to do; and one summer when the gardener took it into his head to walk off the premises without notice, because his employer objected to his staying away from his work for a whole day at some neighbouring races, Richard

cheerfully undertook all the garden work with his master's help, till a new gardener could be found.

"Dear me," I hear you say, "what a treasure of a man that Richard was!"

But wait a bit; do not decide too soon. This was, as I have heard, the common opinion about Richard. He went one day to meet a gentleman at the railway station. This gentleman chatted with Richard on the road, and said on his arrival: "What a capital fellow that is! He is one of nature's aristocracy."

Ay, and so I have no doubt he was, if only he had kept from one bad habit. But his master discovered, after a while, that when Richard left the premises at night, it was very often not to go home, but to betake himself to the "Fox." His master spoke kindly to him, and warned him of the consequences. He had a very large family, all dependent on his labour. He had, I believe, high wages, good clothes, and many presents. But all was of no avail. The visits to the "Fox" grew more frequent. Innumerable evils followed.—Richard, I said, looked after the house, and he took to stealing the oats. He milked the cows, and wasted the milk. He fed the chickens, and robbed the master of the eggs. He pretended to feed the pigs, but carried their food to his own. He brewed the beer, and helped to drink it.—When he came to meet his master at the station, he was unfit to drive him home. Poor Richard! There were great lamentations over him, and many efforts for his recovery. But they were all useless. He was at length dismissed after many warnings. I am told that he is often to be met with in the village—Such an altered man! No smartness now; no light elastic movements. He has sunk, I believe, into a mere drudge on a neighbouring farm, at very different wages from what he received from his first employer. He forgot that *character was everything*.

Richard, as I found on one of my visits, was succeeded by William, a regular—shire rustic. Slow, heavy-heeled, with five thumbs on each hand, and knowledge of the most limited amount. There is a description of such a person, given by the son of Sirach: "How can he get wisdom that holdeth the plough, and that glorieth in the goad, that driveth oxen, and is occur-

plod in their labours, and whose talk is of bullocks? He giveth his mind to make furrows, and is diligent to give the kine fodder."

William's talk had been of bullocks and of cart horses till he knew little else. He was a lame hand with the horse, better a good deal with the cows and pigs, and as to the carpets and window-curtains, my friends were forced to do all they could themselves, or to wait for the carpenter.

But then, William had this virtue—*he had a first rate character.* He was the eldest son of a thorough son of the soil, a —-shire rustic also, who had trained him in the fear of God, and had taught him to believe that character was everything.—William remained in his situation for some time. During his stay the horse grew fat, the pigs had their proper food, and his employers their own beer. At length William won the heart of a —-shire damsel. They wanted to marry, and as there was no vacant house for them, he was compelled to leave. There were, I understood plenty of applications for William: he had several situations to choose from, and he made a good choice. His master sanctioned the wedding by his presence, and gave them their wedding breakfast in his own kitchen. I have heard that William's late employers occasionally see him in his new home, and that he and his wife sometimes return on a visit to their old one. Master and servant never meet without mutual respect and good will, and my friend never tells the history of his two servants without adding, that a young man has learnt a good deal when he has it stamped upon his memory that "character is everything."

You will excuse, I hope, my simple village stories. There is some pith in them, simple as they are. They show what character does for a man so far as this world is concerned.

It is a very common remark for one person to make to another, "character is everything." It is just the summing up of the advice which a wise father would give to his child on his first going into service, or if in any other manner he was getting out to encounter the world's temptations, "Keep a good character my child, and you will always have a good place.—If you lose your character you are done for." It is, in fact, one of the principal

safeguards of society, that, as a general rule, no one can succeed without a good character. Of course there are exceptions to this rule. Bad men do rise sometimes and appear to prosper. But this is most often because they conceal their character. It generally happens that the concealment does not last very long: what is bred in the bone comes out in the flesh. It is very rare for a man, with a really, bad character to hold a high position among his fellow creatures for very long together; so that you may lay it down as a pretty general rule, that a man's success in this life does depend upon his character. It is well for society that it is so. We may reckon it as one of the greatest blessings of a Christian country that the minds of men are so impregnated with the Bible, that a good character does and must prevail. Hence it is of the very utmost importance to avoid the first beginnings of what is wrong.—Familiarity with bad things soon grows into a habit; habit becomes second nature; the spark increases into a flame, the flame destroys the building.

There are some who may read this paper to whom their character is literally everything: it is their only fortune; it is the very strength of their right hands; it is the only weapon which they can shoulder when they begin to carve their way through life.

"The man that steals my purse, steals trash: But he that robs me of my good name, Robs me of that which not enriches him, And makes me poor indeed."

To such I can only say: "Guard well your fortune; take care how you get the first bloom rubbed off it; look out for the beginnings of wrong; keep your weapon bright; it will stand you in good stead in the day of trial; it will, by God's grace, make you a happy and contented man as long as you live."

I have spoken of worldly things; I will now ask you to read one short verse of the Bible, from Psalm xi. 4. "The Lord is in his holy temple; the Lord's throne is in heaven; his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men."

Reader, these words tell us that other eyes beside those of our fellow men are on our characters. It is a fact, that with God, as well as with men, *character*, in rather an altered sense of the word, and as the

evidence of true inward life, *is everything.*

A man's character is himself. What you like or dislike in him; what you admire or find fault with is not so much his look as his character. He may be very pleasant to look at, and yet very disagreeable to deal with; or he may have no features in all his countenance that you can admire, and yet his presence be acceptable. His character is himself. I do not mean to say that nice looks are not desirable; I know that they go a long way towards gaining acceptance for their owner; but after all, "manners make the man." We know that Satan himself can be transformed into an angel of light, and that a very Joseph can be concealed beneath a rough exterior.

If character, then, be so important in the eyes of men, what must it be with God? He regards the person of no man. When his eyes behold and his eyelids try the children of men, he regards not the strength of the arm, nor the power of the frame, nor the symmetry of the countenance, nor the loveliness of the complexion—but the character. There is not much difference, that I can see, in the way of stating the case for this world and for the next. A wise parent says to a child: "Keep a good character, my child, and you will always have a good place. If you lose your character, you are done for." He might stretch his thoughts beyond the little horizon of a short human existence: he might point to a world that is to dawn on us when this world is done with, and with great reverence he might add: "Keep your character pure, my child, by God's grace: regulate it carefully after God's word, and you will have a good place given you, through the merits of your Saviour, in the world to come. But if you suffer your character, through Satan's wiles, to be spotted and defiled, you will be ruined eternally." Yes, it is quite as true of God as it is of man, that in his sight, character is everything.—*Sunday at Home.*

WILD GOATS.

In the account of Saul's pursuit of David to En-gedi, two circumstances are mentioned which are worthy of a passing remark. The first is, that there were *sheep-cotes* there in connection with the cave into

which Saul retired. I have seen hundreds of them around the mouth of caverns, and, indeed, there is scarcely a cave in the land whose location will admit of being thus occupied, but has such a "cote" in front of it, generally made by piling up loose stones into a circular wall, which is covered with thorns as a further protection against robbers and wild beasts. During cold storms, and in the night, the flocks retreat into the cave, but at other times they remain in this enclosed cote. The cavern may have been full of them when the king entered; nor would his presence have disturbed them—as I have found on many occasions—while their constant tramping about the sleeping Saul would have rendered the approach of David wholly unnoticed. I have heard them step over me when resting in such caves, and have seen them actually tramp on their sleeping shepherd without disturbing his slumbers. Moreover, these caverns are as dark as midnight, and the keenest eye cannot see five paces *inward*; but one who has been long within, and is looking *outward* toward the entrance, can observe with perfect distinctness all that takes place in that direction. David, therefore, could watch Saul as he came in, and notice the exact place where he "covered his feet," while he could see nothing but impenetrable darkness.

The other fact is, that the cliffs about En-gedi were then called the "rocks of the wild goats;" and from them, doubtless, the place received its name, En-gedi (Ain Jidy) the Fountain of the Goats.—Now it is a remarkable and a pleasing circumstance that these bold and hardy dwellers upon the rocks are still found in the wild ravines about Ain Jidy. I have seen the skin and powerful horns of one that was shot there by an Arab hunter.

"AND LO! I AM WITH YOU
ALWAYS."

"And lo! I am with you always," saith our Saviour. Every Christian is beset at times with a sense of fear. The world, the devil, and the flesh, all combine to annoy, distract, and terrify him; and often as he views his vast responsibility—the high stand he has taken, the constant effort and watchfulness required, he is ready to exclaim, "Who is sufficient for

these things?" If there was no source of help except in man—the hopeless answer of despair must echo round the world—no one.

And here is the occasion of fear: man ever inclines to trust in his own strength; for if the Christian trust wholly, without reserve, in the Rock of strength he cannot fear; but in proportion as he trusts in an arm of flesh he is beset with fear and surrounded with darkness.

And where is the Christian so full of hope, and joy, and peace, that he does not sometimes need the encouragement here given—"Lo! I am with you." Gracious promise, glorious assurance. Are you weary, Christian brother? Do you feel the burden of sin pressing upon you? or the crushing weight of the care, anxiety, and turmoil of Christian warfare? Hear the voice of your Captain—I am with you. Reflect upon the character of him who thus speaks; upon his kindness, and power, and love, and then upon the certainty of his promise, and let it fill the soul with courage, hope, and love.

THE GOOD FIGHT.

BY THOMAS GUTHRIE, D.D.

The Christian's fight is a good fight—

1. Because it is in a good cause.

With the justice and reason of any war, our soldiers are supposed to have nothing to do; these are to be discussed in parliament, but not in barrack-rooms. The theory of a standing army is such, that from the commander-in-chief down to the drummer-boy, the soldier is considered as much a mere machine as the musket in his hands. This presents to many, one of the most serious and difficult questions as to the lawfulness of his profession. While we may feel no such scruples, it ought to make us, as far as possible, live peaceably with all men, and never but as a last resort appeal to the arbitration of arms. How often have good men been found fighting on the bad side! and how often has the trumpet, summoned from their distant homes and peaceful occupations, those who had no quarrels to settle, nor wrongs to complain of, to the bloody work of slaughter; to destroy each other's lives and to mangle each other's bodies, till, in that

poor, mutilated humanity, a mother would not know her own son! In war both sides cannot be right; and the death of every man, therefore, who falls on the side that stands up for the right against the wrong is a murder, on which the almighty Judge will hold severe and solemn inquest—laying the guilt at the right door. But, however soldiers may come to regard themselves, or be regarded by others, as machines who are to obey orders without inquiring into the merits of the war, still a man is a man—he has what his arms have not, reason and conscience; nor can he, though he would, suppress their voice within him.—I can fancy cases where he has little heart to fight. He is not sure that it is "a good fight." Ordered to cut down one, who, though a naked savage, stands on the shore of his country to defend it from aggressors, or on the threshold of his door to protect his wife and daughters from the hands of a brutal soldiery, the sympathies of a generous man cannot be on the same side as his sword.

Now, if, soldiers of the cross, you have formidable enemies to contend with, you have an immense advantage in this—that your cause is just, and noble, and holy and good. It is "a good fight." Your enemies are not your kindred, bone of your bone, flesh of your flesh; they are the enemies of God and Christ; of virtue and liberty; of light and peace; of your children and of your race; of your bodies and of your souls—tyrants that would bind you in chains worse than iron, and burn, not your house above your head, but yourself in hell for ever. I am not saying that the sword has not often flashed on the side of the right and been bathed in tyrant's blood; but men never drew sword in a cause like this; nor to any battle so much as that to which I summon you with the world, the devil, and the flesh, are the few pithy words of a brave old general so appropriate. His men were waiting to be addressed ere the fight began. Erect in his saddle, with his gray hairs streaming in the wind, he stretched out his arm, and pointing to the foe in front said, ere he rang out the word Fire! "There are the enemy; if you do not kill them, they will kill you." So with us. We must destroy sin, or be destroyed by it. Be assured that, unless your prayers stop your sin, your

sins will stop your prayers; and that by God's help you must kill sin, or sin will kill you.

2. Because here victory is unmingled joy.

It is not so in other fights. The laurels that are won where groans of suffering mingle with the shouts of battle, are steeped in tears; and when common roar and bells ring out a victory, and shouting crowds throng the streets, and illuminations turn night into day, dark is many a home, where fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, widows and orphans, weep for the brave who shall never return. It is said of God, that, in sweet flowers, and singing birds, and painted shells, and shining stars, in all the beautiful and happy works of his hands, he takes delight; but the best and bravest soldiers have sickened at the sight of the work of their hands in that field of carnage, where, locked like brothers in each other's arms, friend and foe lie quietly together in one gory bed. There are thorns in victory's proudest crown. He, whom men call the Iron Duke, is reported to have said that there was nothing so dreadful as a battle won, but a battle lost.

Thank God, our joy over sins slain, bad passions subdued, Satan defeated, has to suffer no such abatements. Heaven, that I can fancy hiding its eyes from other battles, watches the fortunes of this with keenest and kindest interest; angels rejoice in your success; nor are any tears shed here but such as poured from the father's eye, when, kissing the returned prodigal and folding him in his happy embraces, he cried, Let us eat, and be merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.

I wish to enlist you as soldiers of the cross. This is a good fight in other than these, in all its aspects: what a captain in Jesus; what arms in the whole armour of God—the very ring and sight of which, as they shine in the beams of the Sun of righteousness, make Satan tremble; what a helmet for the head in salvation; what a shield in faith; what a breast plate in the righteousness that protects the believer's heart; what a sword in that of the Spirit, the Word of God; what a girdle for the body in truth; in peace what shoes for the feet; and last of all, in a crown immortal

what a prize to reward your watchings and prayers, your tears and toils, the blows you strike and wounds you suffer! I can understand men in that terrible war which is now raging beyond the Atlantic, flying, as they are said to do, not through cowardice, but to escape military service. So long as the battle cry is the Union *with* slavery, not *without* it, to me the ground of battle is not clear; I cannot feel, to use the words of my text, that it is "a good fight." But who can doubt that here? It is a fight for your soul; it is a battle for heaven; it is bleeding slaves up in arms against their old masters; doomed prisoners fighting their way to the open door, and dashing themselves on those who would bar their escape to life and liberty. Break away from your sins; and, taking unto you the whole armour of God, throw yourselves into this battle. By that I cannot say you will win heaven, but you will win to it; and thus possess the prize which your Saviour purchased.

No doubt it is a hard fight; I do not conceal or disguise that. How can it be easy for a man to overcome the world and crucify his own flesh? But if that is hard, it is harder far to suffer the pains of a lost soul, to lie down in everlasting burnings. Oh! surely better lose a hand than have the whole body burn; better part with some darling sin than part with Jesus.— You have no choice; they only that carry swords on earth shall wave palms in heaven; nor shall any but they who walk here in armour walk there in brightness. The crown is for saints, not for sinners; not for cowards, but for conquerors. And how can you conquer unless you fight? The promises are to him that conquers, to him that overcometh—not, indeed, by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts— "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God;" "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death;" "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels;" and still higher honour, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne."