

THE CANADA CHRISTIAN MONTHLY.

SEPTEMBER, 1876.

EDITORIAL.

THE PRESENT STATE OF A GREAT QUESTION.

We see that in almost every country, especially in Britain and the United States, the question of the Religious Instruction of the young, is becoming one of their vexed questions.

Thoughtful men believe that it is the first question of the day, as lying, indeed, at the bottom of various problems civil and social, as well as religious and spiritual. The reasons for this are obvious:—

1. *Government by the people and for the people* is coming to the front everywhere, even in Turkey now at length, as the principle that is in future to underlie political institutions. Whether the form of government be republican or monarchical, as long as the will of the people, and the welfare of the people are the chief means and chief end, —the issue is the same under the two sister types of civil rule, as Britain and the United States to-day very clearly show. Whether in this form or in that, the time has come for the people everywhere to reign; "Jehovah has triumphed: his people are free."

2. *The people are not fitted to exercise this power, nor to retain it long in their hands, unless they are educated.*—Again

and again has power slipped out of the hands of the people into the hands of cunning and designing men; because, the people were ignorant, and therefore, easily duped. It was the knowledge of this fact that stirred up England and Scotland to hurry on the enactment of their Education Bills, close on the heels of the recent Reform Bill. Free institutions demand an intelligent people.

3. *Education is incomplete*; and, as the course of French History shows, worthless for civil order, without religion, that is, without making provision for the development and training of the moral faculty. The capability of a citizen to rule, his fitness to discharge with credit and honesty the duties of civil office and responsible trust hang as closely on his stern allegiance to moral law, as on his acquaintance with the rules of arithmetic. Is the United States not suffering at present, from the lack of conscience in its public officers, more than from the lack of cleverness? "A sense of duty" as the Rev. Patrick Fairbairn, says, "or the felt obligation to keep God's commandments, has with good reason, been called the very backbone of religious character." Mr. Maurice has said (Preface to sermons on the Ten

Commandments) that "the reverence for an unchangeable law and a living lawgiver, has given to the Scottish character its strength and solidity." Ewald to the same effect asserts, "There is among men no free and effective guidance; but, when the individual human spirit submits to be directed and governed by the eternal, all-ruling Spirit." So clear indeed is the necessity of educating men in the *right* as well as in the *true* and *beautiful*, that men like even Huxley are found advocating the training of children in the maxims and morality of the Bible, as the best course in the world to make them good citizens.

So far there is general agreement among writers and thinkers of opposite schools of thought and theology. It is when we descend to practical measures that we meet with differences, divergences and difficulties. When we come to the question, Who ought to teach the youthful citizen religion and morals, we meet with a great variety of opinions. All sensible men, however, must agree in these positions:—

1. That the work of the moral and religious training of the young, should rest chiefly on the *shoulders of the parents*. This is a truth that cannot be pressed home too frequently on the people. Moses the foremost of legislators, ancient or modern, left the moral training of the young entirely in the hands of parents. These are his weighty words: "These words that I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down and when thou risest up." But it is a well-known fact that many parents are unable or unwilling to do this work, and those who do it best would be the better of help. What is to be done for these neglected children, and to assist parents who are

doing their best? Our answer lies in this next statement, which will be generally accepted.

2. That it is the duty of *Christian congregations* to look after the religious instruction of the young. It is the duty of each pastor to devote a large portion of his time to this work. An aged minister once said that neglecting the young was the great blunder of his ministry. In cases where the pastor has too much to do to allow him to attend to this, the congregation should engage a lay-catechist, whose work ought to lie exclusively in catechising the young. We know one congregation in London, England, who have engaged the service of a second minister who is known and honoured in the congregation as the children's minister—an honourable name and an honourable office also. There are few of our city congregations but could afford to engage a pious layman, to attend wholly to the work of ministering to the young of the flock. Many young men who have passed through college, but who are unpopular as preachers, might do noble work for the church in this position and work. Then, the Sabbath School is a good, useful agency for doing the work, but, more limited in its results than many think: from these two facts: (1) that it is only *say two hours* in the *week*, or it may be *one* that can be given to its business. In the week there are 168 hours in all, and 100 hours of working and learning time; for every hour that his eyes are unsealed from sleep, a child is in some sort at school. What, therefore, is one hour out of a hundred? And then (2) it is a rare thing to get hold of one fitted as a teacher, to arrest the attention of the young. It will be found that the amount of work done by many teachers in their classes, is just to hear the children read and repeat their verses without any attempt at systematic teaching of either history or doctrine. After parent and pastor,

catechist and teacher, have done their work, much yet remains to be done. The large proportion of Christians in every country, are therefore, fully prepared to admit this third proposition following:

8. That it is the duty of the *Public Schools* to give to the children attending them, instruction and training in *morals and religion*: carefully avoiding, however, denominational peculiarities. This proposition is held by the Christian people of the United States, with emphatic distinctness in opposition to the denominationalism of the Popish Church, and the materialism of the Germans. It is a proposition on which the recent Education Acts for England and Scotland are based,—the Bible in England and in Scotland, “use and wont,” *i.e.*, the Bible and the Catechism. The opinion, however, that the Public Schools of a country should give instruction in morals and religion, is held in three different forms.

(1.) Some hold that there should be in our Schools moral training, but no definite time or book for moral instruction. Professor Young, of University College, takes this ground in his recent Educational notes of a visit to Baltimore and Philadelphia. We quote a paragraph from his letter, bearing on this point:

“Because moral training is of unspeakable importance; because it is more important than all other parts of a child’s education taken together; because the neglect of it is the worst fault of which a teacher can be guilty; the conclusion has been drawn that there ought to be stated periods set apart for moral training, and that suitable text-books in morals should be put into the hands of the children attending our schools. It would be inappropriate to discuss this theory in the present communication; I merely indicate that I dissent from the theory entirely. I hold that moral instruction

should not be given at stated periods, but should pervade the entire school discipline and exercises. A teacher—whether he be engaged with classes in drawing, in arithmetic, in geography, in history, or on any other subject—whether he be bestowing prizes or punishing culprits should consider himself as an instructor in morals. To call up a class at a stated time for instruction in morals, would create in the minds of the children the idea that the teacher was not at all times earnestly concerned in their moral culture; it would have the injurious effect of throwing the minds of the pupils into an attitude of opposition to the moral lessons sought to be conveyed; and, if a text-book of morals were used, even supposing it to be a good text-book, the still more injurious effect would be produced, that moral precepts would be committed to memory as a disagreeable task, and the form of ethical instruction would be maintained at the expense of the spirit. There are two practical inferences—besides others of deeper importance, not requiring to be now developed—to which these remarks obviously point;—1st. The timetables in our schools should contain no stated period set aside for instruction in morals. 2nd. The Minister of Education should not encourage the use of catechisms or other ethical text books in our schools.”

As to the absurdity of any text-book on morals save one, *viz.*, the Bible, few will differ from Mr. Young: nor can there be anything but agreement on the part of sensible people as to what he says with regard to what is really the main thing as to moral training, *viz.*, that a moral atmosphere should pervade the entire school in its entire work. This is surely the main thing; but the difficulty naturally occurs, how can there be a practice of morals without a code of morality? How can there be a code of morality?

without the Bible? and how can the Bible be a code of morality without its being read, known, and openly appealed to as such? It would surely be unreasonable for our learned friend, the Professor of Logic, to expect his students to reason with his own logical precision, and to think at all times as becomes sound metaphysicians, like their distinguished master, without any "stated period set aside for instruction in logic and metaphysics." It would be unreasonable to expect a man to become proficient in some art and yet grudge him time, text-book, and teacher in the principles that underlie the art. Can soldiers march with precision and fight as a disciplined host without ever having been taught from a military text-book or having spent an hour in drill? As unreasonable is it indeed to expect children to practice morality at play and at work, without any stated book or period for moral instruction, as it would be to expect their parents to practice morality in the shop and in the family without any text-book in morals, that is without the Bible, and without any stated period for instruction,—that is without the Sabbath. Our schools are places for learning what morality is as well as for practising it. In carrying into actual use the plan of Professor Young, it would be a very strange thing should the teacher be many times a day involved in the dilemma humorously suggested by Dr. Begg. "Again, how was a teacher to enforce discipline in his school? Suppose a child told a lie. The teacher said it was bad to tell a lie. "Why so?" the child might say. "Ah," replied the teacher, "I will tell you when we are out of school; I can't tell you here." (Loud laughter.)

(2.) Some hold that there should be in every public school moral training, and that in order to moral training there should be in every school and in the hand of every child that can read

it, a Bible, and stated periods for listening to the words, the reasons, the stories in which the Bible gives forth its utterances on morality. As these are the views of the editor, and as they have been explained and vindicated again and again in the pages of this Monthly, it is unnecessary to say any thing more at present on this head.

(3.) Some hold that religion and morality should be taught in the school buildings, and to the school children; but at hours beyond school hours, and by men who are not the school teachers. Here are the words in which Mr. Dick Peddie explains this plan before the Edinburgh School Board at a recent meeting.

"What they proposed was that at the hour set apart for religious instruction the schools should be thrown open, under such regulations as the board might adopt for securing order, and on payment of an adequate rent to all churches or religious associations of the parents; that each church or society might provide for its own children religious instruction, and for the children whose parents belonged to no church or cared for no religious instruction, it might be provided by those who could induce the parents to allow their children to attend. There would be no difficulty in working out this plan. Doubtless all the great Presbyterian Churches and the great bulk of the evangelical Dissenters would join in one organization for this important work. The Roman Catholics would, of course, go by themselves, the Episcopalians would doubtless do the same, and so might other small bodies of marked religious opinions. But doubtless the great mass of the evangelical denominations would work in entire harmony."

Mr. Peddie gives some seven reasons in favour of his scheme, but they seemed to carry little force with the School-board, for only the mover and the seconder voted for giving the plan a trial.

It is good to see this question attracting attention; it is good to see the foremost thinkers of our day turning their attention to the subject; it

is good to have various opinions advanced even though some of them should be impractical and visionary. The more Christians look into the matter the more clearly will they see the truth and reasonableness of the following positions :—

1. It is the duty of parents to give the highest place to the instruction of their children, in the facts, doctrines, and duties of religion as revealed in the Bible. 2. Pastors of congregations should to the utmost stimulate, direct, and assist by Bible classes and Sabbath schools, the parentage of their flocks

in this great work. 3. In hiring teachers who must for six hours each day stand in the place of the parents, the Christian character of the teacher should be a matter of great and wise care on the part of those engaging him.

4. It is the duty of parents who are under law to Christ in all things to remember what they owe to Christ in arranging about the branches to be taught their children, and therefore to give a high place to the "FEAR OF THE LORD, WHICH IS THE PRINCIPAL PART OF KNOWLEDGE."

LIVING PREACHERS.

A DRAMA IN FIVE ACTS.

BY THE REV. JAMES CAMERON, CHATSWORTH,
ONTARIO.

"Fear not thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord and thy Redeemer, the Holy one of Israel. Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument, having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff. Thou shalt tan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them; and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord and shalt glory in the Holy one of Israel."—Isaiah xli. 14, 15, 16.

These words, taken from this gospel chapter, of this gospel section, of this gospel prophet, embody a long story in a short and dramatic shape. In these words we find hidden, as in a mystery, the history of the Jewish church, from its feeble, despised condition in Babylon to its establishment again in its own land; and also, as in a deeper mystery, the history of

the christian church from the first coming of Christ to his second coming; and further, in a deeper mystery still, the history of religion in the soul of man, from its first rise in conversion to its consummation in glory. That threefold mystery is no doubt the hidden frame-work which the prophet here clothes in poetical imagery. The threefold mystery of Jewish history, Christian history, individual history is put before us here in a dramatic form in five Acts, very startling in their boldness and originality.

I. The first Act of the drama introduces on the stage a very despicable creature,—a worm,—“worm Jacob,” a worm such as was bred in the manna which was kept till morning, or a worm such as breeds in the bodies of those that lie unburied in the battle field, or a worm such as destroyed Jorah's gourd, for it is the same word here and in these places in the original tongue. It would seem in bad taste for a refined writer and a lofty poet like Isaiah to introduce such loathsome imagery into his poetry. This

criticism would be correct if the sole end of the poet was to *please* his readers. It is not pleasure but *truth* that constitutes the mission of the poets of the Bible. Hence the necessity of here introducing this grovelling creature, that he may show the truth as regards the subject in hand. When a nation, or a church, or an individual is compared to a worm, there is told us in that comparison, in language that all the world can understand, that that nation, or church, or individual has sunk into a degraded miserable condition. To be a worm is to be weak and helpless, liable to be crushed by every one that crosses its path. To be a worm is to be loathsome in the eyes of others. To be a worm is to be of a cowardly heart, living in constant terror and seeking ever to hide from the light. Are not these features the very features that distinguished the Jews during the years of their captivity in Babylon. That proud city was in the height of its glory: into its slave markets conquering armies brought these miserable men from the cities of Judah. They were bought and sold like cattle, and counted as worms of the earth.

But is the language applicable to Christ and his followers? Yes, though not in the same sense. In the eyes of his Pharisaical countrymen Christ was a worm. "I am a worm, and no man," is his own interpretation of public sentiment in regard to him. As for his followers, they were mean and miserable in the eyes of Jews and Greeks. "Away with such a fellow, he is not fit to live," is the shout with which the city of Jerusalem greeted the greatest of the early Christians. That same man was greeted in Athens in a similar fashion. "What will this babbler (or base fellow, or worm) say?" And in one of his letters he says, "We (the apostles of this new faith) are made as the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things

unto this day." "Worm" is therefore descriptive of the church of God in Babylon during the captivity, and of the christian church in the early stage of its history. It is a worm mean, despised; a worm weak and helpless; a worm in the weakness of its faith till Pentecost comes. Such also is the position in which God finds each individual of his church. A worm in misery, in weakness, in abject terror. Man began by aiming at being a god: he has ended in being a worm. "Ye shall be gods" is the lying promise. "I was afraid and hid myself" is the awful reality." But there a ray of hope in the full name given here to the church. It is the worm *Jacob*. What is implied in this will appear as we go along.

II. The second Act in this drama introduces on the stage a man. "*Ye men of Israel*." The noun is plural, but the idea is singular all through the verses. The worm is changed into a man. This need not startle us as a thing impossible. It is uncommon, and to man impossible and unnatural to talk of turning a worm into a man. It is a common enough sight for man to be changed into worms; but the contrary is different business,—to change a worm into a man. It is, however, within the scope of God's doings on this earth. Did he not at the beginning turn a lump of clay into a living man? Did he not in the valley of Vision turn a field of dry bones into an exceeding great army of living men? And on the great day of the resurrection will not the same God raise from the dust of the grave the bodies of a buried world? Why, therefore, should it be thought a thing incredible unto you that God should do this thing, even turn him, a crawling worm, into a free man? (1) This is done every time a sinner is converted. Conversion is a change from the darkness and degradation of a creeping thing into the glorious

liberty of the sons of God. Nothing less than this is sufficient to qualify men for their high destiny. Men must be created anew, must be born again, must be raised from the dead before they can enter the kingdom of grace, or the kingdom of glory. The work of the church in its mission of converting the world is not, therefore, to educate and enlighten men who remain at heart worms; but, by the grace of God, to turn worms into men. The reason why this so-called christian country of our is so full of crimes of all kinds is that so many are still at heart worms of the dust, grovelling in the mire of covetousness, uncleanness, malice, and wickedness. To elevate society it must be regenerated, to purify the stream salt must be cast into the fountain, God must be able to address the worm *Jacob* as the man *Israel*. (2.) This very thing we see taking place in a visible form in the city of Babylon. Shortly after Jerusalem was taken by Nebuchadnezzar, a band of four lads arrived in Babylon, ragged and forlorn. They were entered as slaves in the palace of the king. For three years they were there, but the king never deigned to notice these men. But when no man could be found to tell the king his dream, one of these worms ventured into the presence of the awful potentate. He delivered his message with the courage, wisdom, mercy of a true man into whose nostrils God breathed the breath of life. The worm has become a man. Ah! yes, and he who thought himself a man, even a god, is now a worm at the feet of this true man, for the king, we are told, fell on his face and worshipped Daniel. A similar scene occurs when the three companions of Daniel walked into the fiery furnace, like true men, rather than be worms, worshipping an image of gold. And thus the feeble church became strong, the worms became men, till at last

the walls of Jerusalem again rose from their ruins, and the temple was rebuilt.

(3.) From a similar condition of weakness did God raise his Church at the coming of Christ. What were the first disciples and founders of Christianity but worms in their own eyes, in the eyes of the world, and in the eyes of God? but they became men. Listen to what some of them say after the great change came to them. Zaccheus, a worm whose food was dust, stands on his feet when the breath of a new life entered into him, and, like a man, said, "If I have taken anything from any man by false accusation I will restore him four-fold." Peter, who like a worm crawled in terror at the feet of a woman, stands erect like one in the image of God before the Jewish Council, saying, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God judge ye, for we cannot but speak the things that we have seen and heard." It was these worms who became "men of Israel," men of prayer and power, that turned the world upside down, and laid deep and strong the foundations of the Christian Church. But how was this great work accomplished? This introduces to us the next Act of the strange drama.

III. The third Act is one of startling grandeur. On every side there rise mountains and hills. These mountains lift their heads to the clouds like Horeb and Hermon. They lie across the path of Israel's progress, hem him in on every side, and threaten his very life. These mountains and hills represent the dangers and difficulties that lie in the way of holiness in the human heart, and in the way of human progress in the world. And this figure of mountains and hills represents, not so much the number and variety of the difficulties in the path of grace in the heart and in the

world, as the unsurmountable character, as far as human strength is concerned, of these difficulties. Mountains are stable. They always remain. Nations perish and cities pass away, streams and lakes dry up, forest and plain are constantly changing under the hand of man, but the mountains abide for ever. They, like the sea, are images of eternity. Such are the difficulties that encompass the man Israel. Difficulties that no human skill, or courage or perseverance without God could surmount. Between Israel, captives in Babylon, and restoration to their own land, there lay a tyrant, (Nebuchadnezzar) as terrible as the Pharaoh of their early history and a wilderness as hard to cross as the wilderness of the wandering. In like manner there lay in the path of the early Christian Church the empire of the seven hills with its city, its idolatry, its vices, and its two edged sword. In our day the mountains and hills that lies in the path of the Church are still formidable enough to awaken anxious thoughts in the breasts of the most confident.

The question may well be put: Why does God place his Israel face to face with such difficulties? (1) To exercise his patience. Between a man and a mountain the contest must be long, and in this task there is abundant opportunity for the exercise of patience,—patient waiting for the end. (2) To develop all the manly graces of the Christian character.—Where is there exercise to develop the muscles of man like the work of toiling on the side of a mountain with spade and pick to clear it for the path. It is in contending with moral difficulties that rose to the sky like mountains, that men like Noah, and Abraham, and Moses, and David, and Daniel, and Paul became what they were, and still are, and will be, for the discipline of time extends into eternity. (3.) To glorify God. On this I need not here enlarge

as it will meet us in another place, but must hasten on to view the next step in the progress of this great business.

IV. The object that next appears on the stage as the fourth Act begins is startling in its seeming incongruity. But let us remember that it is truth the prophet has in his eye and not scenic or theatrical effect. "I will make thee a new threshing instrument." What is this strange object into which the man Israel is changed. "A new sharp threshing instrument having teeth." What kind of instrument is it? To explain let me quote from Dr. Robinson's Researches in Palestine, which is exact in accord with my own observation in that country.

"We now ascended the hill towards the west and came soon to the threshing floors of the village. They were in full operation. Here we first fell in with the sled or sledge for threshing. It consists of two planks fastened together side by side and bent upwards in front; precisely like the common stone sledge of New England, though less heavy. Many holes are bored in the bottom underneath, and into these are fixed sharp fragments of hard stone. The machine is dragged by the oxen as they are driven round upon the grain. Sometimes a man or a boy sits on it. The object of it is to cut up the straw quite fine."

But why this instrument in such time and at such a place? The answer is before us suggested by the text, and given under the third head. No sooner did the man Israel step on the stage and look around him than, as we have said, a wild and discouraging scene broke on his sight. High mountains, and smaller hills fill the whc's field of vision. They lie in his path; they threaten to fall on his head. He trembles, he bewails his sad lot; he complains that he was ever made a man to be placed in such a place. Suddenly one appears on the scene who was present all the time, but who

now makes himself known. His name is the Redeemer, the Holy one of Israel. "His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow; His eyes were as a flame of fire; His feet were like unto fine brass, burning in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; His countenance, as the sun, shineth in His strength." He spoke to the terrified man, and said, "Fear not, I will help thee." How is this help to come? "I will make thee a new threshing instrument." There are two ways in which the Lord assists his people. Sometimes, though not often, he says "Stand still and see the salvation of God," asking and taking no help from them. His usual way, however, is the way proposed here. "I will make thee." The meaning is not "make for thee," but make thee: "make thyself," in the sense in which Micah wrote, referring to the same time in the history of the church, "Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion; for I will make thy horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass, and thou shalt beat in pieces many people." Micah iv. 13. The mountains and hills mean as I have already said the difficulties that lie in the way of the church. In the way of the handful of Jews who lived in Babylon there lay great mountains before they could rebuild their city and temple. Would Nebuchadnezzar allow them to leave? How were they to make the long and dangerous journey? Where were the means to come from? How could they defend themselves from the surrounding nations? To all this the reply is I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff. In the path of Christianity there lay at the beginning, and still there lies mountains and hills of difficulty. When Jesus sent out the eleven from Bethany to evangelize the

world the path was hemmed in with mountains and hills of danger and difficulty. There were Jewish pride and intolerance; Roman power; pagan idolatry; popular ignorance corrupt morals. It is not a matter of speculation but a matter of history that over these dangers and difficulties the Christian Church conquered, and that in the way foretold in the text. There are mountains and hills still in the path of Christianity. One such mountain we see in the false philosophies of the day; another in the atheism and infidelity that prevail in cultivated society; another in the worldliness, that finds a home in the very heart of the Christian Church; another in the traffic in strong drink, which robs the churches of Britain of 10,000 members each passing year. When we go outside our own land we see lofty mountains towering in the path of Christianity: we see Popish superstition, Pagan idolatry, Mahomedan delusion, Jewish bigotry. In Africa we see Fetishism; in India, Brahminism; in China, Buddhism; mountains whose tops reach to heaven. But to all we may say, "What are ye, O great mountains? before Christ ye shall become a plain." The new sharp threshing, having teeth, shall thresh the mountains and beat them small, and make the hills as chaff.

The figure used here by the Holy Spirit, when the church is compared to a threshing instrument, is suggestive of very important truths. The instrument is *one*. It may be composed of two or three planks, but it is one instrument. So is that holy Catholic Church that God has used, is now using, and will yet use to thresh the mountains. It is one in its holding the head—Christ, in its exaltation of his cross, in insisting on holy lives in his disciples. The instrument is *new*. All the old religion and philosophies broke down in their conflict with the granite mountains;

but here is a new instrument on a new principle, working in a new way. The instrument is *sharp*. By contact with the world the old religions grew blunt; they adopted low views of God, slight views of sin, gentle views of its demerits. But this is a sharp instrument, sharp in exalting the holiness and justice of God, in denouncing all sin as deserving his wrath and curse, both in this world and in the world which is to come. We see its sharpness in the woes uttered by Christ, in his description of the last judgment and the punishment of the wicked: we feel its sharpness in Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, in the death of Ananias and Saphira, in the three days distress of Paul. The instrument has *teeth*. What are these teeth? They may mean principles. If so we cannot complain much of the enumeration made of the teeth by which Christianity overcame as we find them in the *Five Causes* of Gibbon; the zeal of the christian, their doctrine of a future life, their power of working miracles, their pure morals, their discipline. But it is quite safe for us to look on each tooth in the instrument as a *person*, office-bearers, and communicants in the Christian Church. Each minister and elder, and communicant in the church comes in contact each day and in various ways with the world. It is by their influence the mountain is worn down, worn down by a slow gradual progress, by the instrument going over it as the threshing instrument goes over the grain. But the chief thought in the figure is that this engine of destruction is only an *instrument* in the hands of the Holy one of Israel. He has constructed it, he leads it, he directs it, and it is only as it is in his hands that it is efficacious for the work assigned it. And what is that work? It is to beat the mountains small; after which it becomes the work of the wind to carry

away the dust and the whirlwind to scatter it, so that it will never more be seen. It was thus the Roman Empire 1400 years ago disappeared. The Christian Church threshed the mountains small, and the whirlwind of the Goths carried the debris away. It was thus a few years ago slavery disappeared from this continent. The prevalence of Christian doctrine threshed the mountain small as dust; and the whirlwind of the civil war carried it away. It is thus the world is subdued to Christ. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal," says Paul, "but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and everything that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

V. The din and dust of this awful conflict now ceases, and the last act of the drama is ushered in. The threshing instrument has now disappeared; its work is done; the mountains have been ground into dust; the wind carried the dust away and the whirlwind has scattered it. The mountains have become a plain, "the wilderness has become a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water where grow the cedar, the shittah-tree, and the myrtle and the oil tree, the fir-tree, the pine and the box tree together." In this scene of beauty and fertility, and peace, there walks a man singing this song: "Rejoice in the Lord and glory in the Holy One of Israel." Thus ends all conflict carried on in the name of God and in his strength. The worm that became a man, must take on him the strength, the sternness, the flinty face of a new, sharp threshing instrument having teeth, to do the work of conflict with indwelling sin within, and with the varied forms of wickedness without. To some extent the peace of joy of this song is often

experienced after severe conflict in the history of the individual believer. There was a partial experience of it by the Jews after their return from the Babylonish captivity, especially during the revival under Ezra. In a still higher sense does this song convey the experience of many a season in the experience of the church since the days of Christ; but this song in its fullness will not be sung till the days of millennial glory.

They are blessed times when this song is the song of the individual or the church. Blessed times, for they are times of gladness; "Rejoice in the Lord." It is a time of anxiety and sadness when the great mountains rise on every side; a time of toil and weariness when the slow work of grinding them down inch by inch went on, a time of awe and excitement while the whirlwind filled the air with the fragments of falling empires and perishing dynasties. But all this is now over, and it is a time of gladness. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. Blessed times, for they are times of humility. There is no word about self; the Lord did it all, "according as it is written he that glorieth let him glory in the Lord." Blessed times, for they are times of lofty piety. That aspect of God's character on which the church dwells is indicative of the church's spiritual condition. When sins prevail, then the church glories in God's mercy; when weakness is felt it glories in God's power; but when it glories in God's holiness, it has reached a standard of piety akin to heaven, where the song is "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty."

In conclusion, let us gather a few lessons from this dramatic representation of the church's origin, progress, conflicts and triumphs. Here is com-

fort for the weak. What can be weaker than a worm? Yet the worm trusting in God, leaning on him, submitting to him, was able to beat the mountains of difficulties small, and to make the hills of opposition like chaff. "If the Lord be for us, who can be against us?" 2.—Here is a call to hard work. It is toilsome work to thresh grain; but what must it be to thresh granite? Our conflict with evil is nothing else than grinding down by slow stages the granite rock. 3.—Here is a call to patience. Again and again the threshing instrument has to go on with the threshing—flow round and round from morning till night. So must we work to overcome evil. "Let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due time we shall reap, if we faint not." 4.—Here is a promise to the Christian and a prospect of complete success. Step by step the work of disintegration goes on, particle by particle the debris is carried from the scene of conflict, till at last, by the whirlwind's blast, nothing of the great mountains remain, nothing whatever. 5.—Here is a warning to those who oppose themselves to God. Their end is hopeless destruction from the presence of the Lord. What greater contrast can there be, than between the singer with his song, and the dust the whirlwind is scattering to the four winds of heaven? Even so is the difference between the ultimate fate of the righteous and the wicked. And where is there any hope as to the ultimate restoration of the wicked after they have been driven from the presence of the Lord? Here there is none. They pass into outer darkness. "Kiss ye the Son, lest He be angry and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little; blessed are all they that put their trust in Him." Amen.

POETRY.

JESUS, JUSTICE, AND THE SINNER.

Jesus. Bring forth the pris'ner, Justice.

Justice. Thy commands

Are done, just Judge; see, nere the pris'ner stands.

Jesus. What has the pris'ner done? Say, what's the cause
Of his commitment?

Justice. He hath broke the laws

Of his too gracious God; conspired the death

Of that great Majesty that gave him breath,

And heaps transgression, Lord, upon transgression.

Jesus. How know'st thou this?

Justice. E'en by his own confession.

His sins are crying; and they cried aloud;

They cried to Heav'n, they cried to Heav'n for blood.

Jesus. What say'st thou, sinner? hast thou aught to plead

That sentence should not pass? hold up thy head,

And show thy brazen, thy rebellious face.

Sinner. Ah, me! I dare not, I'm too vile and base

To tread upon the earth, much more to lift

Mine eyes to Heav'n. I need no other shrift

Than mine own conscience. Lord, I must confess

I am no more than dust, and no whit less

Than mine indictment styles me. Ah! if thou

Search too severe, with too severe a brow,

What flesh can stand? I have transgress'd Thy laws;

My merits plead Thy vengeance, not my cause.

Justice. Lord, shall I strike the blow?

Jesus. Hold, Justice, stay:

Sinner, speak on; what hast thou more to say?

Sinner. Vile as I am, and of myself abhorr'd,

I am Thy handy work, Thy creature, Lord,

Stamp'd with thy glorious image, and at first

Most like to Thee, though now a poor accurst,

Convicted caitiff, and degen'rate creature,

Here trembling at thy bar.

Justice. Thy fault's the greater.

Lord, shall I strike the blow?

Jesus. Hold, Justice, stay.

Speak, sinner, hast thou nothing else to say?

Sinner. Nothing but mercy, mercy, Lord. My state

Is miserably poor and desperate;

I quite renounce myself, the world, and flee
From Law to Jesus, from myself to Thee.

Justice. Cease thy vain hopes ; my angry God has vow'd
Abused mercy must have blood for blood.

Shall I strike 'the blow ?

Jesus. Stay, Justice, hold,

My bowels yearn, my fainting heart grows cold,
To view the trembling wretch ; methinks I spy
My Father's image in the pris'ner's eye.

Justice. I cannot hold.

Jesus. Then turn thy thirsty blade

Into My side, let there the wound be made :

Cheer up, dear soul ; redeem thy life with mine ;

My soul shall smart, My heart shall bleed for thine.

Sinner. O groundless deeps ! O love beyond degree !

Th' offended dies to set th' offended free !

Quarles.

“YEA, LET HIM TAKE ALL.”

Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.

Take my hands, and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love.

Take my feet, and let them be
Swift and beautiful for Thee.

Take my voice and let me sing
Always, only, for my King.

Take my lips and let them be
Filled with messages from Thee.

Take my silver and my gold,
Not a mite would I withhold.

Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my intellect, and use
Every power as Thou shalt choose.

Take my will, and make it Thine ;
It shall be no longer mine.

Take my heart, it is Thine own !
It shall be Thy royal throne.

Take my love ; my Lord, I pour
At Thy feet its treasure-store !

Take my self, and I will be,
Ever, only all, for Thee !—*Francis Ridley Havergal.*

JESUS ONLY.

Nothing between, Lord, nothing between :
 Let me Thy glory see ;
 Draw my soul closer to Thee,
 Then speak in love to me :
 Nothing between.

Nothing between, Lord, nothing between :
 Let not earth's din and noise
 Stifle Thy still small voice ;
 In it let me rejoice :
 Nothing between,

Nothing between, Lord, nothing between ;
 Nothing of earthly care,
 Nothing of tear or prayer,
 No robe that self may wear :
 Nothing between.

Nothing between, Lord, nothing between :
 Unbelief disappear,
 Vanish each doubt and fear,
 Fading when Thou art near :
 Nothing between.

Nothing between, Lord, nothing between :
 Shine with unclouded ray,
 Chasing each mist away,
 O'er my whole heart let Thy sway ;
 Nothing between.

—*Friends' Review.*

THE OLD FRIENDS.

Where are they scattered now,
 The old, old friends ?
 One made her dwelling where the maples glow,
 And mighty streams through solemn forests flow,
 But never from that pine-crowned land of snow
 A message sends.

Some meet we oft amid
 Life's common ways ;
 But then, perchance, a word or smile declares
 That warm hearts throb beneath their load of cares ;
 For love grows on, like wheat among the tares,
 Till harvest days.

“But some are fallen asleep;”
 The words are sweet!
 O, friends at rest beneath the blessed sod,
 My feet still tread the weary road ye trod
 Ere, yet your loving souls went back to God,
 When shall we meet?

O, thou divinest Friend,
 When shall it be
 That I may know them in their garments white?
 And see them with a new and clearer sight,
 Mine old, familiar friends made fair and bright,
 Like unto Thee!

—*Sunday Magazine.*

CHRISTIAN THOUGHT.

THE HONOUR BELONGING TO AGE AND EXPERIENCE.

Mr. Gladstone spoke the other day with great sense to the students of King's College, London, on a point in which students need a word of caution. He spoke with great wisdom of the folly of rejecting or despising, or neglecting the conclusions to which our fathers came in the region of thought.

We give here a portion of his address:

“You live in a very peculiar time. You will all of you have to encounter very great intellectual temptations. The rapid extension of knowledge, especially in certain departments, the continual and lightning-like circulation of intelligence, tends, as it were, to raise the moral and intellectual temperature of the mind, and with that raised temperature there comes a liability to excitement, and with that liability to excitement comes, invariably, unless we are upon our guard against it, instability of mind and loss of those solid qualities upon which the essence of human character

depends. It is requisite at these times, beyond all other times, perhaps—certainly beyond all recent times—not that men should quench, or even check, their eagerness for knowledge, but it is requisite that you should always keep in view those laws which appertain to our human condition, and which tend to secure the steady direction of our path. Now, for example, there is the first principle of all, which old men and young men likewise should take for their guidance; and that is the law of a supreme allegiance to truth. There is no noble life and no principle of nobility in life which can possibly be appropriated by men, unless it include that supreme allegiance to truth and the firm disposition to make any sacrifice for attaining it and for retaining it. At the same time do not let us suppose that by the adoption of any formula, be that formula what it may, we are secured against intellectual and moral danger. When you go abroad in the world you will find that there are many who suppose that when they

proclaim their allegiance to truth they are thereby proclaiming their resistance to authority. There is nothing more common in the sciolism of this day—and if it is a day in which knowledge is abundant it is a day in which I might almost say that sciolism still more abounds—but there are many who think that authority, as an auxiliary principle in the guidance of the human mind, is nothing but a mischief and an abuse, and that when you say that you are attached to truth, when you say that you are a votary of reason, that means you hold yourself bound to deny all claims whatever of authority or of tradition. There can be no more gross superstition than this. (Applause.) And rely upon it, that superstition is an enemy of the human race that has a multitude of forms, and that is just as capable of clothing itself in the form of novelty as in any other form whatever; nor do I know anything in which superstition is more largely shown, or more grossly shown, than in the inconsiderate embrace of a novelty because it is new. (Applause.) I think that in the pupil rooms of this institution there are some of you who, if they had come into these pupil rooms possessed with the idea that they were to attach no weight whatever to the authority of their teachers, would not have obtained the prizes that I have had the satisfaction of placing in your hands. (Cheers.) Authority, in its genuine sense, represents the title to speak and to teach that is derived from the anterior labours of mankind; and it is indeed a formidable thing if we determine to say that we, who are now born into this world, will have no regard to the anterior labours of mankind. That is a thing that in regard to the regions of knowledge and of religion, men think they may say with impunity. If they were to say it in any other department of human life they would find the con-

sequences very inconvenient. If they were to say it in reference to most questions of practical conduct, the men of sense among whom they live would simply enrol them, without much ceremony in the class of fools. (A laugh.) If they were to say it with regard to matters of civil government, the probability is that they might come into very disagreeable relations with those agents of authority, clad in blue, whom we meet from time to time as we walk along the streets. (Laughter.) Depend upon it, the extension of knowledge, for which we have so much reason to be thankful, is a regulated and not a revolutionary extension. The extension of knowledge undoubtedly in many things involves the correction of previous knowledge, or what was supposed to be previous knowledge; but it would be almost better to forfeit the immense benefits arising from new knowledge, than to embrace the idiotic propensity of some to deny all value to the old knowledge of mankind. We represent, perhaps, speaking in round numbers, the hundredth of a hundred generations of men, and there are some who think, or seem to think, that for this hundredth generation exclusive favours of Providence have been reserved; that the other 99 did not possess the same faculties, or did not make proper use of them; and that all we have to do is to turn topsy-turvy everything that they thought or decided. Now, I believe you, who are shortly to be English citizens, cannot do better than take a lesson from the general method pursued in the regulation of the public affairs of this country. Comparing us with other countries of the world there has, on the whole, been a very considerable amount of disposition in those who have ruled this country to avail themselves of increasing knowledge, and to adapt the institutions of the country to the times. On the

other hand, there has never been at any time a disposition among any political party in this country, or at any rate among any political party with the existence of which I am conversant, to undervalue the enormous treasure handed down to us in the laws, traditions, and institutions of this country, in its improvement and enlargement, to which we look, and the improvement and enlargement conducted in a spirit of energy, and likewise in a spirit of sobriety. The very same laws of our being that govern us in practical affairs should govern us also in the regions of knowledge. The same dangers of excitement, of conceit, of too rapid and hasty inference not warranted by the basis of facts upon which it is founded—these very same dangers which Englishmen know how to avoid in their political affairs, are dangers by which we are not less beset in the region of intellectual inquiry and exertion. Now, for example, in the time in which we live. It is a time that has been distinguished by immense advances in physical knowledge. There are some, perhaps there are many, who appear to think that these immense advances in physical knowledge have been attended by an equal accession of information, and an equal growth and capacity to form and give judgment in the region of that moral knowledge which relates to human nature and its conditions. I believe it is impossible to conceive a grosser error. The advance of knowledge in any one department is undoubtedly, if it be wisely used, auxiliary to the advance of knowledge in every other department; but if, instead of being wisely used, it is never compared with other knowledge—if each man gets upon his own hobby and rides it till it is out of breath—if each man assures that the very process by which in a particular subject-matter he has attained to a

particular amount of truth will invariably, without any new means or instruments, in every other subject-matter, and without considering the specialties of each, lead him to the possession of all truth, the probability is that he will fail in his object, and the possibility is that the very knowledge he possesses may be a mischief to him by depriving him of other and yet more valuable knowledge that he ought to possess in life. In truth, there is one kind of knowledge that is more important almost than any other, and that is to know the limits of our own knowledge. If we know the limits of our own knowledge, and if we at the same time endeavor to make use of it within those limits, then all knowledge, be it much or be it little, is unmingledly valuable and precious. But if, possessing knowledge within certain narrow limits, we suppose it over-rides the whole field of that which possibly may be known, then that very knowledge becomes to us a snare and a delusion, and leads us into evils greater far than any, perhaps, for which it can compensate within its own domain. I therefore would say to you who are young, never forget the supreme allegiance due to truth. Never suppose that in giving supreme allegiance to truth, it means that you are to cast off all the valuable aids that you derive from the assistance of your seniors now alive, and from the assistance of the seniors of us all, viz., the former generations, that, like us, have lived and moved upon the earth, and that probably have done their duty according to their means as well as most of us will. Never consider that it can be wise, or that it can be anything but the greatest folly, to overlook their achievements. Cherish, on the contrary, the disposition to turn them to good account; respect what they have done; give due weight to their judgments; but don't renounce the es-

essential prerogative of freedom which, after due examination, and with due care and scrutiny, binds you to ratify conclusions for yourselves, and to walk as responsible beings who must answer before God both for what they think and for what they do. Be always anxious to extend the limits of your knowledge, as well as to deepen it within its limits, but never forget to recognize those limits—and beware of allowing yourselves under the subtle influence of self-love to suppose when you have acquired but little, that you have acquired all; for little it is that any of you can acquire in comparison with the whole of that which may be known. There was a time, and that not a very distant time—say 200 years ago, which I think is not a very immoderate estimate—when men endowed with large talents and great capacity of application might be said to attain the entire possession of such knowledge as was then at the command of mankind. There was a very great advantage, I think, for individual discovery in that state of things, because it was then practicable for such men as I have in my view—I could not name, perhaps, a better instance than Lord Bacon—such a man as Lord Bacon, or, perhaps, still better, such a man as Leibnitz—it was then possible for him to survey the whole field of human knowledge, and to consider every department of it in its relation to every other department. Now, that has become almost impossible. The field is so widened, and the specialties are so multiplied, that all the best men and the most diligent men can do is to acquire knowledge of a few branches,

and if he supposes he can acquire the whole it is a mere and utter delusion. You will see hereafter how deeply and specially important it is in these days—and no doubt it will be increasingly important in every generation that has to come—that we should learn, and embrace, and cherish the knowledge of these cautions of which I have spoken, and should be on our guard against the subtle suggestions of self-love, which may teach us to think that that which we know, and which we feel a pleasure in knowing, involves all that is worth knowing, and makes us competent judges, without further inquiry, of all subjects which may be brought before us. These cautions I hope you will carry with you into the world. I hope you will not suppose that in saying this, and in addressing to you words which some might think would have not only a sobering, but a chilling effect, that I forget the noble and inspiring lessons that are to be drawn at all times, and especially on an occasion like this, in witnessing the first ardent efforts of youth, than which nothing, believe me, more deeply touches the heart of the old, or can more powerfully draw forth from the inmost recesses of that heart the expression of a fond and earnest desire that all you have done to-day may be to you nothing but an incentive and an earnest of future efforts and future successes, to be achieved intellectually in your progress through the world, and to be attended with the cultivation of any higher than even intellectual excellence that can make your life happy and honoured, and your memory blessed among those who shall come after. (Loud cheers.)

CHRISTIAN LIFE.

ISAAC WATTS.*

The name of Dr. Watts is a household word throughout Christendom, but comparatively few, we apprehend, are familiar with the story of his life. He has had other biographers, but none have succeeded so well as Mr. Paxton Hood in collecting and arranging the slender materials of his history. We should have been surprised had Mr. Hood failed to do justice to his subject, for he has brought to the task a mind richly stored with biographical lore, a poetic genius of no mean order, and a just enthusiasm for his hero. Hood's life of Isaac Watts will transform a name into a living, breathing reality to multitudes of readers, for every page glows with the brightest touches of the writer's genius. It is impossible to study the character of Watts, which Mr. Hood so faithfully delineates, without a thrill of admiration for the man; or to ponder over the labours of his life without breathing the grateful emotion of the soul in a psalm of thanksgiving to God.

In the year in which Milton died Watts was born; and though his genius found scope for its exercise in a different sphere, he may be regarded as no unworthy successor of the nonconformist, scholar, patriot, and poet. He was a precocious child, and at the age of four he commenced learning Latin; at nine he added Greek to his studies, and, before he was fourteen, French and Hebrew. His father was a deacon of the Independent church at Southampton,

in the gaol of which town he was imprisoned for his nonconformity in the eventful years of 1674-5, when Isaac was an infant. To his grandmother, perhaps as much to his mother, he was indebted for his earliest lessons, which influenced his mind and character. At fourteen he writes "fell under considerable convictions of sin," and a year later he adds, "and was taught to trust in Christ, I hope." We wonder whether it was after indulging in grateful reminiscences, he wrote the hymn containing the lines:

"A flower when offered in the bud,
Is no vain sacrifice."

We are no advocates of that precocity of infancy which is often purchased at the expense of mature age, but in the case of Watts we cannot but admire the genius which anticipated the slow development of years. Although he maintained his mental vigour to the last, an enfeebled constitution limited his usefulness, and yet, perhaps, it is scarcely just to pronounce this judgment, for in the comparative seclusion which he sought, he set the gospel to music, and enriched the church with a precious legacy of holy song.

Bunyan and Howe, Newton and Locke, Sely and Wren, Doddridge and Watts, men who, in "a wild, wicked, and frivolous time" enriched our literature, and added imperishable monuments to our national greatness, were, for a greater or less period, cotemporaries. Although "the avenues to prosperity and peace seemed to lie in the conformity to the Church of England," Isaac Watts maintained the integrity of his convictions, refused the offer of a friend to defray his expenses at the university, and

* "Isaac Watts; His Life and Writings, etc. By E. Paxton Hood, London. The Religious Tract Society, 56 Paternoster Row.

cast in his lot amongst the dissenters. In the year 1690, then but sixteen years of age, he entered the academy at Stoke Newington to prepare for the ministry. "The pupil was nearer to manhood than was implied in his years; he was a well informed and richly cultivated scholar when he left his father's house." The two methods of study which he pursued might be adopted by our young men with considerable advantage, viz. :—to abridge the works of general writers, and then analyze the digest thus made; and, secondly, to interleave the works of authors with blank leaves, and transfer additions from other writers on the same subjects. In this way an author may be mastered and a subject compassed. He found a true friend in his tutor, and in his lines "to the much honoured Mr. Thomas Rowe, the director of my youthful studies," he says :—

"Thy gentle influence, like the sun,
Only dissolves the frozen snow,
Then bids our thoughts, like rivers flow,
And choose the channels where they run."

Perhaps there is a mild censure implied in the last line, for several students of dissenting academies had gone over to the communion of the established church; amongst whom may be mentioned, the father of the Wesleys, Dr. Butler, who became Bishop of Durham, and Dr. Secker, Archbishop of Canterbury. Charity forbids, or it might be said of these and others, they sacrificed principle to preferment.

Having completed his studies at Stoke Newington, Watts returned to Southampton, where he expressed the opinion that "the psalmody was far beneath the beauty and dignity of a Christian service," and was requested to produce something better. The following Sunday he presented his first hymn, which was sang at the close of the service.

"Behold the glories of the Lamb
Amidst his Father's throne;
Prepare new honours for his name
And songs before unknown."

The innovation was hailed by many as a desirable improvement, and song after song flowed from his ready pen.

Returning to Stoke Newington at the age of twenty-two, he took up his residence in the family mansion of Sir John Hartopp, as private tutor to the future baronet. It was at this period he wrote his "Miscellaneous Thoughts," "Logic," and "Improvement of the mind." His industry was untiring; Mr. Hood says, "he had his work to do, and he wrought at it like a living conscience." Consecrated genius and conscientious industry were the factors in the marvelous products of his life. On his twenty-fourth birthday, he preached his first sermon, in the church of Dr. Chauncy, in Mark Lane, with whom he shared the pastorate for nearly four years, and whom he succeeded as sole pastor. It was no easy task for a young man to minister to a congregation which had been presided over by Joseph Caryl and John Owen. "From the pulpit of this place Caryl probably poured forth those prelections on the book of Job, assuredly in more than one sense a monument to the memory of patience! Vast and mammoth like, a megatherium of books, the most huge commentary ever written, but a structure of learning, with eloquence and evangelical truth, if large in bulk, almost equal in worth." If the illnesses of Watts interfered with his public ministrations, they chastened his spirit and drew forth the richest consolations for many a suffering saint. Writing to a brother minister in affliction, he says, "It is my hearty desire for you that your faith may ride out the storms of temptation, and the anchor of your hope may hold, being fixed within the veil. There sits Jesus our forerunner,

who sailed over this rough sea before us, and has given us a chart, even his word, where the shelves and rocks, the fierce currents and dangers are well described, and he is our pilot, and will conduct us to the shores of happiness. I am persuaded, then, in the future state, we shall take a sweet review of those scenes of providence which have been involved in the thickest darkness, and trace those footsteps of God when he walked with us through the deepest waters. This will be a surprising delight, to survey the manifold harmony of clashing dispensations, and to have those perplexing riddles laid open to the eyes of our souls, and read the full meaning of them in set characters of wisdom and grace.

Absorbed by his philosophical and ministerial labours, and devoting his leisure hours to the composition of his hymns and sacred lyrics, he played a very insignificant part in the events of that stirring age, between the last years of the reign of Charles II. and the closing years of the second George. He was not a social demagogue, a political partizan, nor a religious agitator; like a star, which sheds its benign radiance through the gloom of a tempest-wrought sky, he dwelt apart, while the influence of his saintly life and consecrated genius shone all the brighter for the storms which raged around. If we cannot speak of Watts as a foremost champion of the rights and liberties of the people, we must not regard him as an indifferent spectator of the wrongs under which they suffered. He advocated those principles which were already beginning to leaven public opinion, and preferred the pen to the sword as the weapon of his warfare. "He was essentially," says his biographer, "a man of contemplation; his activity was only the reflection of a contemplative life."

In height Dr. Watts was below the

average, and often had to listen to unkind reflection upon his diminutive stature by men whose height was a poor compensation for the small dimensions of their brains. Overhearing the remark by a stranger—"What! is that the great Dr. Watts?" he is said to have pencilled the impromptu verse—

"Were I so tall to reach the pole,
And grasp the ocean in my span:
I must be measured by my soul—
The mind's the standard of the man."

Although the verse was undoubtedly written by Watts, it is just possible that the incident which is said to have suggested it may be fabulous. Another anecdote is related of him, but his biographer hints a doubt as to its authenticity. "When once in a coffee house, and somewhat in the way of a tall giant of a man, he said to Watts, 'Let me pass, O giant!' and Watts replied, 'Passon, O pigmy!' 'I only referred to your mind,' said the giant. 'I also to yours,' replied Watt."

One of the smallest of mortals, he had one of the largest homes. After a severe illness he was invited by Sir Thomas and Lady Abney to spend a few weeks with them in their country mansion at Cheshunt, and he resided with the family for a period of thirty-six years. They accounted it no mean honour to minister to the comfort of their worthy guest, and, by relieving him of the cares which would have pressed heavily upon his sensitive spirit, to enable him to pursue his congenial studies. When lady Abney came to Stoke Newington, Watts came with her, and here he spent the last thirteen years of his life. "waiting God's leave to die." The grounds surrounding the mansion have been converted into the Abney Park Cemetery, which has become since the closing of Eumhill Fields, "a sort of *santa croce* or *campo santo* of revered and hallowed dust.

Dr. Johnson, speaking of the vast range of thought compassed by Watts, says, "Every man acquainted with the common principles of human action will look with veneration on the writer who is at one time combating Locke, and at another making a catechism for children in their fourth year," Paxton Hood says of his "Logic" and the "Improvement of the Mind," "No book can be better fitted to strengthen and direct the mind in the first years of mind-life," and no better evidence can be afforded than the fact that for many years it was the text book at both our Universities. His treatise on "The World to Come," though but little known now, was, at one time, deservedly popular, and abounds with many passages of fervour and beauty. As a preacher, he was rather practical than profound, and if his diction was highly polished, his sermons were composed of the true metal. In reprobing the philosophical preaching of a certain school, he exclaims, "Go, dress up all the virtues of human nature in all the beauties of your oratory, and declaim aloud on the praise of social virtue and the amiable qualities of goodness, till your hearts or lungs ache, among the lower herds of mankind, and you will ever find, as your *heathen fathers* have done before you, that the wild appetites and passions of men are too violent to be restrained by such mild and silken language. You may as well build up a fence of straw and feathers to resist a cannon ball, or try to quench a flaming grenade with a shell of fair water, as hope to succeed in these attempts. But an eternal heaven and an eternal hell carry a divine force and power with them." He asks with a touch of scorn, "When you brush over the closed eyelid with a feather, did you ever find it give light to the blind? Have any of your soft harangues, your continued threads of silken eloquence, ever raised

the dead?" In his sermons, he disdained the pride of reason and the affectations of philosophy, and preached to be "understood of the people." Like many other good men, he was the victim of abuse and misrepresentation, but his character was too transparent to suffer from the venomous sting of slanderous tongues. A good man in the happy consciousness of his integrity may commit his cause to the righteous judgment of God and await the issues of the last tribunal. To sully the fair fame of a good man's character is no novel artifice of the enemy. If he cannot destroy the righteous, he will tarnish the lustre of their piety; if the truth is imperishable, he will corrupt it with an admixture of error. "But we are not ignorant of his devices." His bitter and most persistent opponent was Thomas Bradbury, a neighbouring minister, and whose calumnious persecution earned for him the suggestive title of *Shimei* Bradbury. Dr. Watts maintained his position as a minister of the gospel for upwards of fifty years, during the greater part of which period he was assisted by a devoted co-pastor.

It is, after all, as a hymn writer that Watts is best known, and, as many of his hymns bear the impress of immortality, his name will never be forgotten. At the time of his advent to London, the quickened piety of the churches demanded holy songs for its expression in praise, adoration, and thanksgiving; but congregational singing was regarded by many dissenters as an innovation not to be tolerated. When Benjamin Keach, after long argument and effort, introduced singing as an integral part of congregational worship, "a minority withdrew, and took refuge in a songless sanctuary, in which the melody within the heart might be in no danger of disturbance from the perturbations of song." The hymns which Watts had accumulated were now published, but unfor-

tunately the copyright was sold, so that the successive editions appeared without the author's emendations. Had he been at liberty to remove the blemishes which were attached to many of his hymns, John Keble would have had no occasion to say, "he was no poet," and George Macdonald would never have pronounced the verdict, "most of Dr. Watts' hymns are doggrel." That his hymns are unequal we freely admit, but in every one of them there is a touch of genius, while many rise to the height of poetic inspiration. Mr. Hood very truly remarks, "men who have no sympathy with evangelical truth can scarcely be expected to have much admiration for Watts." Nor is the author to be held responsible for all the versions of his hymns, which have found their way into various collections; "many of them have passed through a perfect martyrdom of maltreatment." In his hymns he compassed the vast range of revealed doctrine, and every emotion of the soul finds apt and faultless expression in rhythmical language. "There is an intense and immediate objectiveness about Watts' hymns," says Mr. Hood; "praise, like a clear and glowing firmament, encompasses them all, and the objects of adoration revolve, like the firmamental lights, clear and distinct to the vision." If Augustin's definition of a hymn were adopted, not only would many of Watts' hymns be excluded from our collections, but some of the finest metrical compositions in our language. "Praise to God" is the characteristic of only one class of hymns; but is there no element of praise in the emotions of a soul inspired by the perfections of the Almighty, the blessings of the atonement, and the ministrations of the spirit? Are not the memories of the divine goodness, expressed in holy

song, of the nature of praise? Is not the Lord honoured even by the soul, which is

"Rapt into still communion that transcends
The imperfect offices of praise and prayer."

As the poet of the sanctuary, Watts has laid the church under no small obligation, and as the psalmist of the soul he has furnished a medium for the utterance of every possible emotion, want, and desire.

When he came to die at the ripe age of seventy-four, the calm confidence which he had breathed in many a hymn possessed his soul. The faith by which he had seen the

"Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood,"

grew brighter towards the last. "I have no fear of dying," he said, "it would be my greatest comfort to lie down and sleep, and wake no more." Thus he came to prove, in his own experience, the truth of one of his early hymns—

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are,
While on his breast I lean my head
And breathe my life out sweetly there."

"Without a struggle or a groan" he passed away, November 25th, 1748, to the heaven for which his spirit longed when he sang—

"There shall I bathe my weary soul,
In seas of heavenly rest,
And not a wave of trouble roll
Across my peaceful breast."

* * * *

"Haste, my beloved, fetch my soul
Up to thy bless'd abode:
Fly, for my spirit longs to see
My Saviour and my God!"

* * * *

"Now to the God of victory
Immortal thanks be paid,
Who makes us conquerors while we die,
Through Christ our living head."

VERNON J. CHARLESWORTH.

CHRISTIAN WORK.

CHATAUQUY S. S. ASSEMBLY.

The annual gathering of Sabbath School workers has been held as usual this year at Chatauquy, and with more than the usual success. It would be impossible to give in our space anything like a summary of the work done. We content ourselves with giving here the closing exercises on the 16th ultimo as reported in the *Chatauquy Herald* ;

The exercises began with the reading of the 126th, 127th, and 128th Psalms, by Dr. Vincent, after which Dr. Vincent offered prayer as follows :

We need to pray to Thee, our God, we need Thy pardoning grace, we need Thy quickening spirit, we need Thy guiding hand, we need Thy all-present and unfailing wisdom to protect us, we need Thy heart of love to fold us in the hours of our sorrow and in the hours of our temptation; and as we need Thee, so do we look to Thee, not because the stars have taught us, nor the flowers have taught us, that Thou art our best friend, but because out of Thy word we have found full assurance of the truth; and there we find that the God of the stars, and the God of the flowers, and the God of all great and beautiful things is our God and our Father; and all the strength which we gather out of Thy word, and the strength of the precious promises which we there read, we give to Thee in our sin and helplessness this morning. We call upon Thee for a Father's blessing. We thank Thee for these precious days which we have spent together; for the ample facilities which they have furnished us for enjoyment and for improvement. We thank Thee for the goodly fellowship which we have enjoyed, the fellowship of those we love, the fellowship of those who have been

strangers to us, but are strangers no more; the fellowship of the saints in all the branches of Thy church. We thank Thee for the words of wisdom which have been spoken by Thy servants; for the words of inspiration which have come to us out of warm and earnest hearts; for the words of song and all their power, their ministry and uplifting and exalting. And we pray Thee now, as we gather up in our minds the memories of all these blessed things and the influence of them all, that our hearts may be brought this morning nearer to Thyself. We cry out to Thee out of the depths—

Nearer, O God to Thee,
Nearer to Thee—
E'en though it be a cross
That raiseth me—
Still all my cries shall be,
Nearer, O God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee.

O Lord, bless Thou this Assembly, its officers, its teachers, all its members; and as some of us shall go away, do Thou grant that in our parting we shall go with Thy blessing. Be with those who linger in these groves a few days longer yet. Draw them nearer Thyself, and may we all find our hearts drawn nearer and closer to Thee. We now commit ourselves, our families, our churches, our dearly beloved in every sphere of life, we commend ourselves to Thy precious keeping. Guide us through another year in safety, and grant we may meet again in this beautiful place to enjoy these delightful associations, as we have met and enjoyed them here at this time; and should any who are now here, before we gather for the next Assembly, depart from this life, God grant that they may depart with their hearts full of the brightness and confidence of Thy love.

And now, O God, grant unto us all an abundant entrance into Thine own everlasting kingdom, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

SPEECH BY LEWIS MILLER, ESQ.

After the prayer President Lewis Miller spoke as follows :

Good morning ; and it is good-bye ; and that is the way the world moves. It is "good morning," we come into this beautiful light ; and it is "good-bye." and we lay them in the little, narrow box. Some have come here even, said "good morning," and we have laid them in a little box and carried them away ; and so with life. Who shall be here next year and enjoy these beautiful gatherings and here these voices from this platform ? I had thought of saying about this 'that my relation to this society is very peculiar ; first, probably very honourable ; second, very laborious, and as Dr. Wythe said last night, it was not his privilege to come here and enjoy and hear all these doings that are going on, on the platform. So with myself ; it is to cut off little branches that are around the outskirts of this great Assembly, correcting this little error and that little error on both sides, that we may make and that others may make, and I have prayed that I might have some kind of wisdom that would enable me to discern between the right and wrong, so that I could, if possible, do justice to all. Now I may have misjudged many times, and perhaps sometimes against you, but allow me to say that so far as my heart is concerned there has not been one case that it has been the purpose of my heart to judge against anyone. If I have made mistakes they have been errors of the head and not of the heart. If it has been an error I trust you will forgive me, because if there is one purpose above another it is that we might come together and not have a single branch hanging at the outskirts that

would mar the least possible place in this Assembly. And my joy and my satisfaction comes from seeing you satisfied, and in seeing you enjoying yourselves. If I could sit back there on that platform all the time and see all of you enjoying yourselves and being happy, no greater joy could come to this heart. I have heard but few sermons and few lectures ; I have not been in one of the normal classes in the three years of this Assembly. My work has been around the outskirts to make the people happy ; and when you are happy, then I am happy. And it is only because I have seen so many happy faces here, and so many happy hearts that has made me feel a rejoicing in bearing the burdens I have to bear. Once in a while there has been something that might not be right, but I have tried to pass that by as though it had not occurred. I do not know that there has been a person come to this ground since the Assembly began that I cannot now take by the hands and say, "Welcome to these grounds ; come again, and we will try and do the same thing." And if there are errors look them over, and take them as errors of the head and not of the heart. Good-bye. (Applause.)

SPEECH BY DR. W. W. WYTHE.

President Miller was followed by Dr. Wythe, who spoke as follows :

I have felt exceedingly diffident about addressing this congregation, and I think the reason for that diffidence is, that I have not been able in my own mind to approach the spirit of this meeting. You know when we go to a prayer-meeting or a warm experience meeting, or anything of that sort, we are very jealous if anybody comes in who has not partaken of the spirit and dampens the ardour of the meeting, and I felt as if I came before you with any words, they would be words so far below you in the plane of experience, that I would only dampen your ardor.

And I have only consented this morning to say a word on the request of Dr. Vincent, and I implore you who are spiritual, as the Apostle Paul puts it, to remember in your prayers one who has not the enjoyment that you have had during this meeting. I have often had occasion to feel during the past year, as Brother Miller has said, that my part has been on the outskirts. Yet I have made delightful associations at Chautauquy when I did not know it. I have had occasion during the past year to visit a number of cities, both East and West, and it was wonderful. When I went to these places I met people whom I did not know, as I only get a glance at your faces, yet I find you all know me. (A voice: We all know you, Doctor.) (Applause.) I get off the cars at New York or Chicago, and hardly an hour passes but I meet somebody who takes me by the hand and says, "How do you do, Dr. Wythe." I say "I do not know your name." This answer—"Oh! I met you at Chautauquy." (Applause.) I do not mean to say good-bye this morning, for I expect to meet a great many of you, as I have in the past, and if I do not I hope every Chautauquan will not fail to recognize me and give me a warm greeting, and I will pray this morning that God will bless both you and me, and pray that we may have many pleasant gatherings until, as we sang this morning in the hymn, "We shall shine together as stars in His bright crown." (Applause.)

REMARKS BY PROF. BLISS.

Prof. Bliss was then introduced and sang a new song, "At the feet of Jesus," first saying that he would not say good-by—that he was going to stay to the Church Congress—that what had taken place here so far was very well in all its way—the Scientific and Temperance Congress and Sunday-School Assembly, but the entertain-

ment was yet to take place during the coming days of the Church Congress. He hoped everybody would remain here, but if they must go he wanted them to leave as he would have done if he had been going to leave this morning—go quietly down to the boat and say good-by to no one.

CLOSING REMARKS BY REV. DR. VINCENT.

Dr. Vincent then came forward and said:

In view of the coming Congress we are anxious to hold as many of you here as possible. I remember well the first time I went away from home how I made a bargain with my mother that she should not make much fuss over it, if possible, simply because it was a sad thing to say good-bye. It is really a good thing to say good-bye. It has to be said, it has to be said after a while, it has to be said often, and if the good-bye can be said with an uplifted heart, and with the light of hope; it is not altogether unprofitable to say good-bye. Now to me, Chautauquy has very peculiar charms, it is growing in preciousness to me as the years pass by. The first time we met was a pleasant evening and we were at the opening, at the threshold of an experiment. We had a cheery time, and a series of meetings lasting two weeks. I see faces now that I met then. For fourteen days we had fine lectures and charming concerts, and the inspiration of good fellowship, and when it came to the last day, and we had to say good-bye, I confess my heart leaped to my tongue. Last year it was harder to part, and this year it is harder still, and if I thought it was the last time I should be at Chautauquy, my heart would be about broken I think, because there have grown up such charming associations with people who love noble and beautiful things, with people who love consecrated service, and have the right ideal and strong purpose and strong arm for

the attack, and who are going out from year to year to do more valiant and better service for the Master than they did before. And when Christian people meet and leave, when the parting comes, even though it be the proper time, there is a vein of sadness in it, which, I almost said, if we could we would not avoid. This is a beautiful place, this lake, this grove. And a gentleman, pointing to an old elm, as he passed, said, "That ought to be named, for it is a magnificent tree." And as I look over this great audience, with its sunlight and shadow, a magnificent mosaic, such as no artist ever produced, with light and shade on your faces, and not only the light of heaven, but with glad love and hopes, I say the beauties of this place are enhanced. I have been in the Alps, and in St. Peter's at Rome, and climbed the Pyramids, and rambled over Palestine, and floated on the Nile, and been in Athens, and I don't know where all, but in all the sweet places on this globe of our God there is no place so precious to me as Chautauquy. (Loud applause.) The very mention of the name starts a thousand associations, and fills my heart with beautiful thoughts and aspirations, and the dream of my life is to make this a place so that in years to come, when you and I are dust, they shall come to this beautiful grove and hold sessions of learning and culture and piety, and to do all the holy things that man can do, under the shadow of the Cross of Jesus Christ. Some of us may stay here now two or three days longer, and I am very glad, for we shall have a pleasant time and the Church Congress will be a success. I have no anxiety about it, though Brother Wythe has been hovering around and says, "I don't like the idea of closing up as though this was going to be the end of it." Never mind; there will be plenty of people here, and even if there is but few here,

it will be a success. You may talk about the Scientific Congress, and Temperance Convention, and Reform Councils, and Church Congress; I tell you this is the Sunday School Assembly; and when it breaks up and we shake hands, and the cottages remain here, and a great many people stay here, this is the end of the Sunday School Assembly this year, and I am sorry for it. (Applause.) We go out to work; some to fight, some of us have hard fighting that other people know nothing about. We all have our innermost struggles—talk about martyrs in the old time—there is just as much test of character, and just as much heroism, and just as much danger now as there ever was. I don't know but I had rather risk the old times, when a man standing up for Christ had to be exposed to the lions and tigers in the amphitheatre, than to meet the allurements and fascinations in the world and insidious temptations of the arch demon in all times and in all places. Shall I tell you there are as many crowns to be won to-day as in the olden times of fiery persecutions, and as much need for strength and trusting in God. And I pray God to-day that He will keep us in his power—that we may be prepared to go from this place to-day to do valiant service as His children. (Applause.) Some one has requested me to recite a poem that I read at the close of the Assembly last year. It is a poem that I picked up, and has deeply thrilled me, and at your request I will read it. (Voices—read it—read it).

I sat alone with my conscience,
In a place where time had ceased,
And we talked of my former living
In the land where the years increased:
And I felt I should have to answer
The questions put to me,
And to face the answer and question
Throughout an eternity.

The ghosts of forgotten actions
Came floating before my sight,

And things that I thought were dead things,
Were alive with a terrible might;
And the vision of all my past life
Was an awful thing to taste—
Along with my conscience sitting
In that solemnly silent place.

And I thought of a far-away warning,
Of a sorrow that was to be mine,
In a land that then was the future
But now is the present time;
And I thought of my former thinking
Of the Judgment day to be;
But sitting alone with my conscience
Seemed judgment enough for me.

And I wondered if there was a future
To this land beyond the grave;
But no one gave me an answer
And no one came to save.
Then I felt that the future was present,
And the present would never go by,
For it was but the thought of my past life
Grown into eternity.

Then I woke from my timely dreaming,
And the vision passed away,
And I knew the far away warning
Was a warning of yesterday.
And I pray that I may not forget it
In the land before the grave,
That I may not cry in the future,
And no one come to save.

And so I have learned a lesson
Which I ought to have learned before,
And which, though I learned it dreaming,
I hope to forget no more.
So I sit alone with my conscience
In the place where the years increase,
And I try to remember the future,
In the land where time shall cease.

And I know of the future judgment,
How dreadful so'er it be,
That to sit alone with my conscience
Will be judgment enough for me.

May we this morning have our conscience purged from dead works, and dedicate ourselves to Him who is able to save us. And now, friends, I commend you to the power of His grace, which is able to give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. And now unto Him who is able to do abundantly all that we ask—unto Him be glory in the Church throughout all ages—I commend you, and may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,

and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with you all. I now declare the third annual Sunday-school Assembly closed.

THE LAITY AND CHURCH ACTIVITY.

After the Sabbath School Assembly closed at Chautauqua a Church Conference opened for three days. The first subject brought up for discussion was "What work can Laymen do in the Church."

From the host of eminent workers present Dr. Vincent elicited answers to the following questions:

I. What right have laymen to work in the church?

a. Christ said: "To every man his work," without distinction.

b. The commission, "Go ye into the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," is addressed to the whole church.

II. What work may laymen do?

a. Individual effort on behalf of souls to win them for Christ. There is none who may not recognize the call, "Let him that heareth say come," and cry, Behold the Lamb of God.

b. Instruction—building men up in Christ viz: teaching in the Sunday schools, etc.

c. Financial support of the Gospel—accumulating and giving means.

d. Perform official duties, viz: steward, trustee, deacon, elder, etc.

e. Distribute tracts in connection with business and social converse.

f. Laymen may preach.

g. The powerful aid of prayer for the church and pastor. The inspiration derived from the knowledge that there are persons praying for the speaker was dwelt upon, and illustrated in a touching incident by Dr. Vincent.

h. The laity should in all ways sustain the worship of praise, congregational singing.

i. There should be organized lay effort in every church to reach and relieve the stranger, the sick and the poor.

j. Laymen can purchase sites for church edifices, can collect money for building churches.

k. The laity can greatly aid all church services by filling the front seats.

l. By themselves attending, as a matter of conscience, all the services.

m. By greeting and cordial welcome to strangers—inviting them to pews, furnishing them with hymn books, etc.

n. It is part of laymen's duties to suitably advertise the preaching.

o. To bring in the entire Sunday school into the church.

p. The laity should actively engage in temperance reform, especially among the young.

q. Can engage in mission Sunday Schools and mission prayer-meetings.

r. Cultivate and exemplify Christian benevolence, sustaining all the arms of the Church.

s. Can lead public prayer and speak in social meetings.

t. Co-operate in all pastoral labors.

u. Exemplify in life the power of Christ's Gospel.

v. Can exert a Christian influence upon the public schools, securing Christian teachers, etc.

III. How develop the activity of the laity?

a. By such discussions as are enjoyed at this Church Congress.

b. Personal example encourages other laymen to go and do likewise.

c. Direct appeal—bring all motives to urge more to do everything in their power for Christ.

d. By assigning definite work to individuals, saying not "Work for Christ," but, "Do this little thing for Christ."

e. Show different methods of working for the Master.

f. By wisely commending the real workers.

g. By placing live men at the head.

h. By exalting lay effort as Christian and honourable.

IV. How can we organize laymen for work.

Sub-divide the labor into different departments, appointing a committee for each.

a. On strangers—Looking them up and introducing them into the church.

b. Committee to visit prisons, jails, alms-houses, etc.

c. Reception Committee.

d. To visit hotels and other public places with cards, and invite all there to come to the services of the church.

e. Committee on temperance and out-door exercises.

f. Tract Committee.

g. Ladies to supplement pastor's labors in visiting, etc.

h. Employment Committee.

i. Missions.

j. Committee on Sunday schools.

k. On delinquent members; inquiries.

l. On church periodicals.

m. Financial Committee.

The printing of church manuals and directories was recommended.

PRACTICAL PAPER.

AFTER CONVERSION—WHAT NEXT ?

BY THEODORE L. CUYLER, D.D.

The religious journals have been filled for several months past with the welcome reports of widespread revivals. These have been often spoken of as *harvest* seasons in the various churches. But the phrase is an erroneous and misleading one. Conversion is rather a planting-time with a soul than its "harvest." It is a beginning of better things; not a consummation completed. Those pastors and evangelists commit a fearful mistake who feel that the conversion of sinners is the one main object of all Gospel effort; whereas conversion is only the means, the essential first step to the great end of all true Gospel effort, which is the service of God by a genuine godly life. Those young converts make a still worse mistake, if they sit down happy and contented with having "confessed Christ" and united with his Church. The clock that strikes one is expected to strike two.

What is conversion? It is a turning from the wrong road into the right one. The journey is yet to be performed before Heaven is attained. Too many, alas! set out on this straight road and fall away before they reach the mark of the prize. Conversion is simply an enlisting in the army of Jesus. The battles and the hard bivouacs are yet before you. Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off. We want to impress it on the mind of every young convert that the real conflict has only begun, and they have done no more than to put on their armour and enroll their names. Sup-

posing you to be truly regenerated by the Divine Spirit, what next!

We would reply that the sowing-time of your spiritual spring has just begun. Don't repeat the current prattle about being a "harvested soul gathered into the garner." The Church is not a granary. You are just beginning to sow for yourself: and whatsoever you sow you will surely reap. You are forming new habits of thinking and acting. You are an utterly inexperienced beginner in an entirely new line of life. The first year of your Christian life will have a mighty influence on all your future. Many a wedlock has been spoiled by a bad honeymoon. Many a promising convert has been ruined by an unhappy start; or, at least, his hopes of spiritual power and usefulness have been blasted.

Begin with a determination to learn Christ's will and do it. This is what that famous convert near Damascus was aiming at when he enquired, so anxiously: "Lord, what wilt *thou* have me to do?" It is very well to know what a Bunyan or a Finney or a Moody has written or said about the Christian life. But go to the fountain-head. Go to Jesus in an humble, docile spirit, and ask him in fervent prayer to guide you. Bend your will to his will. He is perfectly willing to guide the meek and the teachable in the right way. I honestly believe that, when a docile heart sincerely asks to be led and then obeys the voice of conscience, that heart seldom takes a false step—yea, never does. Jesus promises to lead you in the way of all truth. Trust him.

Conscience is the vital point. You need not trouble yourself much about your feelings or your frames, as long

as conscience turns as steadily toward Christ as the needle toward the North Pole. It is the office of conscience to detect sin and righteousness; to decide for one and to reject the other. Feelings are very fallacious. Some Christians are very devout in their feelings and wretchedly deficient in their daily conduct. They forget that the best proof of love to Christ is to "keep his commandments." Fervent Christians in the prayer-meeting, they are sorry specimens of Christians outside of it. There is a lamentable lack of conscience in too much of the flaming piety which burns out all its oil in the prayer-room or the "praise-meeting." We do not wonder at the sneers which are often levelled by shrewd men of the world at this sort of "revival religion." See to it that you give no occasion for such sneers. See to it that Jesus is not betrayed before his enemies by your inconsistency. The best thing you can do for your Saviour and your Master is to live an honest, truthful, pure, and godly life. Others are watching you. Then watch over yourself.

In putting on your armor, don't forget that the sword of the Spirit is the Word of God. Not content with merely reading your Bible, study it. Instead of skinning over whole acres of truth, put your spade into the most practical passages and dig deep. Study the twenty-fifth Psalm, and the twelfth chapter of Romans, as well as the sublime eighth chapter. Study the whole epistle of James. It will teach you how a Christian ought to behave before the world. As you get on further, you may strike your hoe and your mattock down into the rich ore-beds of the Book of John. Saturate your heart with God's Word.

As for your field of Christian work, you ought not to have much trouble about that. Follow God's leadings, and go into the first field of labor which he opens to you. Do not seek

easy posts or those which will flatter vanity. Brave Mary Lyon used to tell her pupils at Mount Holyoke to "go where no one else was willing to go." Threescore of her graduates became missionaries for Christ Jesus. As soon as you begin to think that you are too good for your place, then the place is too good for you. Do what you can do best. A converted inebriate in my congregation has found his field in a praying-band for the reformation of drunkards. While you are working for the Master, do not neglect the inner life of your own soul. If you do not keep the fountain well filled with love of Jesus, the stream of your activities will run dry as soon as the novelty is over.

Your daily battle will be with the sins that most easily beset you. The serpent often scotched is not killed. Paul himself had to give his carnal appetites the "black eye" pretty often. You will never get your discharge from this war with the old Adam until you enter Heaven. The moment you fall asleep, the Philistines will be upon you. Challenge every tempter that approaches you. The dangerous devil is the one that wears the white robe and cozens you with a smooth tongue.

Finally, strive to be a Christian man everywhere. Carry the savour of your communion with Christ wherever you go. Jacob brought into his old blind father's presence such an odor of the barley-ground and the vineyard that he had "the smell of a field which the Lord had blessed." Every place you enter ought to be the better for your presence. Never disappoint the expectation of your Master. He is the best master in the universe. Having put on the uniform of His glorious service, wear it until you are laid in your coffin. Carry His banner up to the heavenly gate. When Death calls your name on the roll, be ready to answer "Here.—*N. Y. Independent.*

CHRISTIAN MISCELLANY.

WHAT DR. CHALMERS SAID
TO HIS STUDENTS.

“On the subject of the eternity of future punishment, I do not want you to hold with me the language of a stern dogmatist; but sure I am that the cause of practical religion will suffer greatly in your hands, if you gloss over or reduce the plain literalities of Scripture on the awful question. We cannot hesitate a moment as to what the distinct understanding of every plain unsophisticated man must be, in regard to the sense and doctrine of the Bible, on the matter at issue. There can be no misconceiving that, and without repeating its affirmations, I must say that once you exterminate and dilute them, you inflict a blow on practical religion of which, perhaps, you are not aware. For only think what the great and mischievous delusion is with the majority of the species. It is not in general, that they disbelieve in the realities of a future state, neither is it that they purpose not, some time or other, to provide against them. Perhaps in every Christian land, every nine out of ten have an indefinite, but vague purpose of turning round and betaking themselves in good earnest, to the work of preparation ere they die; but they cannot and will not put forth the resolution of entering upon this decisive movement yet. They are for postponing it a little longer, and a little longer; and it is just this habit of perpetually adjourning the question, of shifting it forward by succeeding intervals, to a more convenient season, of quieting the present by a resolve which shall take effect at some time, or somewhere in the distant futurity before them: it

is this, I say, that shuffles religion onward by little and little, from being seriously felt or seriously proceeded on, and thus, on this ruinous principle, are men borne onward through life till death come upon them like a whirlwind, and they at length find themselves cheated out of their eternity.

Now, what is the effect that the doctrine of the non-eternity of Hell torment would leave upon the human? Just to carry the principle of postponement across the barrier of death altogether—just to make it shoot ahead of the termination of our mortal existence—just to adjourn the whole question from the world we are in to the world which is beyond us—just to banish from human hearts the purpose or the wish to make a recovery from sin to righteousness here, and that because taught to believe a recovery may still be competent there—just to annihilate the character of our earthly state, as being a state of probation, and by lulling men into security, and that there is room for repentance and recovery on the other side of death, to turn the whole of their existence on this side of death into a jubilee of impiety and irreligious defiance.

The Scripture gives us no warrant to believe that our all is not staked, and irrecoverably staked, on the faith and obedience of the present. Be assured you will paralyse all the motives to practical Christianity, by giving *any* countenance to the opposite representation; and you will not only indulge in unlicensed speculation, by attempting to dilute and do away with the obvious literalities of Scripture on this subject, but you will find it a speculation of the most baleful influence on

the practice and the general principles of all who are infected by it.

When the Scripture roundly and explicitly affirms any doctrine, the whole of my Christian philosophy would lead me simply and silently to acquiesce. After this I think it wrong almost to defend the proposition, as if the authority of an accredited message from Heaven needed any confirmation or support from our reasonings. Yet let me briefly and in but one or two sentences, advert to what I hold an important view connected with this matter. When men talk of the disproportion between the sins of an ephemeral life and the penalties of a never ending eternity, it should be recalled that this is not really the light in which the matter ought to be regarded. There is a law of habit exemplified within the field of every man's observation, and which he does not quarrel with. In virtue of this law, by every act of obedience a man becomes stronger in the purpose and character of obedience, and by every act of wickedness the propensities of wickedness lord it all the more strongly and resistlessly over him. Now just imagine the continuity of this process to be kept up between time and eternity, and that if we carry with us unreclaimed impiety and disobedience across the limit which separates the two worlds, we shall carry with us into our future state the habits and the passions and all the vitiated principles of rebellion against God; and the punishments which come on the back of these will not be punishments for the sins of the present life, but fresh punishments for the fresh sins to which the inveteracy of our diseased moral nature is hurrying us—an inveteracy only to be cured on this side of death, and so affording a most impressive argument for our strenuous and, withal, our immediate repentance."

A GOOD OLD HORSE.

A certain brother E., had two brethren, whom we will call A. and B., who were all the time picking at each other, and getting up little fusses. Brother E., getting a little tired of the difficulties, went to brother A., and approached him somewhat in the following manner: "See here, brother A., I have an old horse I want you to get and work for a few days."

"Well why do you want me to do that?" responded A.

"Well," says E., "he is so gentle and quiet, he does just what you tell him. You start anywhere with him he goes right along minding his own business, pays no attention to what does not belong to him; is always peaceable, and gets into no troubles." Said A., somewhat excited:

"Well, brother E., what do you mean by all this? there is a trick in it."

"Well," responded E., "I thought if you would work that old horse awhile you would learn to go along about your own business, and not be all the time trying to pick a fuss with brother B." Brother E. called on brother B. and gave him the same advice. It cured them both. That must be a valuable horse! We wonder if it is for sale or to let. It might pay in some churches or neighbourhoods to buy that horse and loan him out among the brethren, and sisters too, a few days in each place. The suggestion is worth noting.

THE WORKING TEMPERANCE CHURCH.

That Christian church will be most *Christ-like* which does the most to "seek and to save the lost." Among all the great moral reforms none has a stronger claim on Christian men and Christian ministers than the enterprise for saving society from the crime and curse of drunkenness. And intemper-

ance never will be checked, the liquor traffic never will be prohibited, the drinking usages of social life will never be overthrown until the members of *Christ's Church* all feel that they are also members of Christ's great temperance society. If the church does not save the world the world will sink the church. The bottle is the deadliest foe to Christ in our churches and our communities. A friend of Christ must be the enemy of the bottle. More souls are ruined by the intoxicating cup than by any single vice or error on the globe. Every professed Christian who gives his example to the drinking usages is a partner in the tremendous havoc which those evil customs produce. "It is good not to drink wine whereby my brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak." On this immutable rock of self-denial stands the temperance reform! There the Divine Founder of Christianity placed it; with Christianity it is linked; with Christianity it will stand or perish.—*Theodore L. Cuyler.*

FAITH AND MORALS.

Gerritt Smith is reported to have said to his pastor, in a confidential conversation, "The great mistake of my life has been that I have tried to be moral without faith in Jesus, but I have learned that true morality can only keep pace with trust in Christ as my Saviour." There are many men, unfortunately, who, like Mr. Smith, fall into this "mistake," but who never perceive it, or never acknowledge it as candidly. Faith in Jesus Christ, and a true morality, are not separable. A religious life is necessarily a moral life.

It is an old objection, however, used constantly, and with renewed pertinacity. "Why preach Christ?" says one; "why not rather preach the necessity of goodness?" We read in a secular journal, the other

day, the charge that Mr. Moody never preaches "morality." It is always "believe, believe upon the Lord Jesus Christ." A preacher in Chicago, dilating upon the "Glory and Shame of the Revival," says that the crowning "shame" of the revival is, that it is "underlaid by a brutal theology"—the theology, that is, which recognizes the blood of Christ as the cleanser of the human soul. But Mr. Moody preaches the best morality, because he begins with trust in Christ as the Saviour. He avoids the "mistake" which Gerritt Smith testified tainted his whole life. He begins with the faith in Christ which brings the soul into union with Christ, and in this union finds the source of the purest life man can lead. As another well says, "We cannot work *for* life, we work *from* life. We do not work *for* salvation, we work *from* salvation. We do not work in order *to be* saved, we work because we *are* saved." This is the true order, and blessed is that preacher of the gospel who finds this order and stands by it. There will be little trouble in making men *moral*, if only they can first be made profoundly *religious*.

SHAKING OUT THE REEF.

On the wide ocean, between us and India, the wind blows for weeks in one direction. Then the ship moves one day and night, safely, rapidly, and pleasantly. A sea captain has been heard to say that he has sailed his ship six weeks without altering a sail. These are called the "Trade Winds."

"I will tell you a fact about drinking," said a noble old sea captain. "And I tell you, my boys, that when people say, 'it don't hurt anybody to drink too much,' they don't know what they are talking about. There is no such thing as drinking spirits without drinking too much. When I used to

sail to India, and got into the 'Trade Winds,' I used to put all the sails on my ship which she could possibly bear. But I noticed a curious fact. Every morning about eleven o'clock I used to go down into the cabin and take a good horn of brandy. Before going down, I would cast my eye over the ship, see that every sail was full, and every rope taut. On coming out of the cabin, having taken my brandy, it always seemed if she was sailing too slow and the winds had fallen. Then I would cry, 'Up there, lads, and shake out that reef.' For about thirty minutes, my poor ship would stagger under too heavy a press of sail. By that time, when the brandy began to subside, I found she was under too heavy a pressure, the winds seemed to blow harder, and again I would shout, 'Up there, lads, and clew up that reef.'

"So I found it day after day, and was utterly unable to account for the lull in the wind just about that hour. But one day I was unwell, and omitted my brandy, and overheard my cook, black Caesar say, 'Captain drink no brandy to-day, guess no shake out reef!' Then I understood it all! From that time I dropt my brandy, and there was no change in the sails of my ship. I drank moderately, and yet it was too much, and it would not have been strange if I had lost my ship in consequence. I tell you, boys, there is no such thing as drinking without drinking too much!"

It's even so. We don't know but little about it. Many a ship-master has felt cold or hot, tired or sleepy, vexed or troubled, and has gone to the bottle, gained courage to be rash, "shaken out the reef," till his ship was dashed on the rocks, or swamped in the seas. Many a physician has been worn down by labors and anxieties, his nerves weak, and mind wavering and has gone to the bottle, and thus he "shakes out the reef," is rash in dealing his powerful medicines, and

he loses his patients, loses self-reliance, and the confidence of the community, and he loses practice, character, and is ruined. Many a merchant drinks a little, feels more confidence, makes bargains when thus stimulated, "shakes out his reef," and is ruined. Many a mechanic makes a contract which he examined after drinking a little, forgot the number of hard blows it would cost to complete it, and thus he "shakes out his reef"—and is ruined. Many a young man falls into jovial company, feels that it would not be manly to refuse to drink with them, and he drinks, "shakes out the reef," and acquires a taste that is his destruction. And many a bright boy, the hope of his father, and the pride of his mother, learns to drink a little, and thus he "shakes out the reef," disappoints the hopes of his friends, lives a poor creature, dies a drunkard, and reads over the gate of heaven "No drunkard shall inherit eternal life!"—S. S. *Times*.

"SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES."

SCRIPTURE QUESTIONS FOR YOUNG PERSONS
AT HOME OR AT SCHOOL.

THE APOSTLE PAUL'S CONVERSION.— Acts ix. 1-9.

1. Was the education of the Apostle Paul favourable to his reception of Christianity? Why not?
2. Was there anything in his conduct, before his conversion, which marked his enmity to Christ?
3. Was there anything in his previous history, which marked his sincerity and zeal?
4. What was there peculiarly remarkable in the circumstances connected with Paul's conversion?
5. Have we any reason to suppose that such means are necessary to be

used in the conversion of sinners now? Assign some reasons for your answer.

6. Have we any right to conclude that the *miracle* converted Paul? What power was it that accomplished the mighty change?

7. Could not the Apostle's former zeal and sincerity have saved his soul? Why not?

8. What may we consider this change as necessary to his salvation?

9. Why may we conclude that a Divine power accomplished this mighty work?

10. What evidence did Paul give at the time that he was converted?

11. What proofs of conversion did he give in after-life?

12. Is conversion as necessary now, for every sinner, as it was for Paul the persecutor? Why so?

13. What encouragements for the sinner are suggested by the conversion of Paul?

"SAFE."

In the course of my reading I once came across a little incident that impressed itself very strongly upon "memory's walls." There was a Highland mother crossing a moor in Scotland and carrying a young child in her arms. She was overtaken by a violent storm, and was filled with fear for the safety of the infant. With all a mother's tender love, she longed for a place to shelter the helpless charge. She was passing a rock, and was inwardly questioning as to her best course, when lo! a cleft in the rock caught her eye. With a heart bursting with gratitude, she placed the little one in the cleft, and covering it with moss and heather, she proceeded on her journey until she could procure assistance. The storm beat wildly, but the babe was safe, because "hidden in the rock."

So I have compared the safety of the Christian. He, too, is hidden, and though the storms of life may beat around him, he is safe, because hidden in the cleft of the rock Christ Jesus.

MOSES AND CHRIST.

The most successful mode of preaching is that which aims at thorough and radical convictions of sin. The law must be applied with power to the conscience, or the preciousness of grace will be very inadequately known. The superficial piety of the present day is in a large degree owing to feeble impressions of the malignity of sin. That complete breaking up of the fallow ground of the heart, that groaning under bondage, that deep sense of weakness and nothingness which characterized the experience of the past generation, are unsuited to the haste and bustle of this stirring age. The transition from absolute indifference to cordial reliance on Christ must be now made in an instant. One gush of sorrow, one leap of joy, and the work must be done. Such converts can know little of the law, little of Christ, and less of themselves. Men must be soundly instructed by Moses, if they would know the sweetness of the liberty in Christ.—*Thornwell.*

A TALK IN THE INQUIRY ROOM.

At the close of one of the recent meetings at the Agricultural Hall, Islington, we passed into the inquiry room, to converse with some of those who had been awakened to a sense of their need of Christ. Struck by the absent air and clouded face of a young man who entered there, we addressed him with a few kindly words of greeting and then added, "You are in trouble?" He assented. "It is a sense of sin that is troubling you, is it not?" "Yes." We saw that there was no need to press conviction further in this

case. The address to which he had been listening had done its work, the Spirit of God had convinced him of sin, and its exceeding sinfulness. Our work was therefore to seek to remove the burden, which we perceived by his sad, anxious countenance was pressing heavily. "The sin which burdens you" we said "is a debt; the Lord Jesus spoke of sin as a debt: 'forgive us our debts' is used as tantamount to 'forgive us our trespasses' or sins, and the parable of the two debtors teaches the same truth. 'I forgave thee all that debt.' You feel, that you have not rendered to God the obedience, worship, service, and love which you ought to have rendered, which you owe Him, you not?" "I do indeed!"

"This is so much obligation unfulfilled, then, so much *debt*. Now if you owed a debt you could not pay, you must either suffer for it, or get some one else to pay it for you. Christ by His holy life and atoning death paid this debt owed by men to God. He became obedient unto death; He fulfilled all—suffered all. He died—the Just One, instead of us, the unjust. This cancels your debt if you trust in Him; this is your liberation! The debt is paid! The debtor is free! We have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

He listened with eager attention, and drank in the words as we slowly and emphatically uttered them. But we saw he was not satisfied. He needed something more, and he expressed it. He felt not only that he had sinned, but that he was a sinner, and he wanted to become a new creature. "Yes," we said, "sin is not only a debt, it is also a *disease*. It is within you. It is a dreadful tendency or inclination to depart from God, and live to self, is it not?" With deep earnestness he admitted this: "You are quite right in thinking this disease needs healing, this tendency must be cured. Love

to God and man must reign within instead of selfishness; purity and humility must replace sin and pride. But observe; *love believed in begets love*. You never believed the love of God in Christ before! You never before thought of the Lord Jesus as a friend who so loved you as to give His life for you; you have fancied Him as indifferent to you as you have been to Him. But if you see and believe that He has suffered for your sake, borne your load, died your death, endured your curse, you will love Him, will you not?" He assented, with evident sincerity. "You cannot help it!" we added. It is written, "*We love Him because He first loved us.*" Note then, your nature will thus be changed! The Spirit of God will impart to you, who have been till now *only* evil, a new, God-loving, Christ-loving nature. The sorrows that Christ bore will win your heart, when you believe He bore them for you, and because He loved you. 'By His stripes we are healed.' That is all, then! *The debt is paid, and the disease is healed!* The death of Jesus believed in accomplishes the two things you need."

As we spoke a change passed over the young man's countenance. He seemed to withdraw his thoughts from us, and from all around. We left him in perfect silence for a while. By degrees the sad, burdened expression passed from his face; his eye lit with a new intelligence. We saw that the everlasting sunshine of the Gospel had pierced and scattered the shades of ignorance and unbelief. It was a soul passing from death to life under our eyes; it was a heart consenting to be loved and expanding with reciprocal affection. We felt the love of God was being shed abroad in the young man's heart. We grasped his hand as that of a new-found brother, and parted.

A few days after we met again. He was then rejoicing in Christ, and had

brought with him his brother and a friend to hear the Gospel which had given him life and light and liberty.

Reader, do you believe your debt is paid? Can you say your disease of sin is healed? If not, it is because you have never believed that Jesus Christ loved you, and gave Himself for you.

LENGTH OF SERMONS.

The *Congregationalist* has collected many opinions respecting the proper length of sermons. Some prefer twenty minutes, and some an hour, but all desire a vigor of thought, inspiration, force. A dull sermon cannot be too short; an inspiring one is seldom too long. Diversity contributes to the interest and value of a discourse. Unity is demanded by the schools, yet few minds can follow a consecutive argument thirty minutes, while hearers generally delight to have several topics briefly and clearly discussed in succession, and are not wearied but rested by an hour or more of such enjoyment. On this account expository preaching is to be preferred, in which progress and variety are legitimate. The oration is the better style for a man to display himself, exposition better to bring God and man face to face. Two orations on Christianity a week is a great draft upon a preacher's powers; to be mouth-piece for God, opening up his word, seven times a week, is refreshing to speaker and hearer. If preachers improve the quality of their sermons, the people will not object to generous quantity. More of Christ, and less of man, will add to the power of pulpits and piety of pews.

The length of sermons, actual and proper, has occupied several columns of the *Congregationalist*, but the *Vermont Chronicle* has done the whole subject up much more brightly in this paragraph: "The rule seems to be,

as deduced from a vast number of particular facts and opinions, that the length of a sermon should be equal to its breadth and depth. It should be, in fact, the square thing. It ought not be measured by the linear foot, as men measure tape and ribbons, but by the cubic foot, as men measure wheat and other grain. If it has no depth, it ought to have no length. Length, in such a case, is a misnomer and a delusion. To measure sermons with the watch is like measuring corn with a yardstick.

STONEWALL JACKSON'S DEATH-BED.

About daylight on Sunday morning, Mrs. Jackson informed him that his recovery was very doubtful, and that it was better that he should be prepared for the worst. He was silent for a moment, and then said;

"It will be infinite gain to be translated to heaven."

He advised his wife, in the event of his death, to return to her father's house, and added, "You have a kind father, but there is no one so kind and good as your heavenly Father."

He still expressed hope of his recovery, but requested her, if he should die, to have him buried in Lexington, in the Valley of Virginia. His exhaustion increased so rapidly that at 11 o'clock Mrs. Jackson knelt by his bed and told him that before the sun went down he would be with the Saviour.

He replied, "Oh no, you are frightened, my child, death is not so near; I may get well."

She fell over the bed, weeping bitterly, and told him that the physicians said there was no hope. After a moment's pause, he asked her to call me.

"Doctor, Anna informs me that you have told her I am to die to-day. Is it so?"

When he was answered, he turned

his eyes towards the ceiling, and gazed for a moment or two, as if in intense thought, then replied, "Very good, very good; it is all right."

He then tried to comfort his almost heart broken wife, and told her he had a good deal to say to her, but he was too weak. Colonel Pendleton came into the room about one o'clock, and he asked "him who was preaching at the headquarters to-day?" When told that the whole army was praying for him, he replied:

"Thank God! they are very kind."

He said, "It is the Lord's day; my wish is fulfilled. I have always desired to die on Sunday."

His mind now began to fail and wander; and he frequently talked as if in command on the field, giving orders in his old way; then the scene shifted, and he was at the mess-table, in conversation with members of his staff; now with his wife and child; now at prayers with his military family. Occasional intervals of return of his mind would appear, and during one of them I offered him some brandy and water, but he declined it, saying, "It will only delay my departure, and do no good; I want to preserve my mind to the last, if possible."

MATERIALS FOR THOUGHT.

ELOQUENCE.—"Eloquence is *speaking out*—a quality few esteem, and fewer aim at."

EARNESTNESS.—"Unless a man appear by his outward look and gesture to be himself animated by the truths, he is uttering, he will not animate his hearers. It is the live coal that kindles others, not the dead."

DILIGENCE.—"Napoleon won his victories chiefly by rapid concentration of his forces on one part of the enemy's line. A burning glass is powerful because it focalises a mass of sunbeams on one point. So, in all departments

of activity, to have *one* thing to do and then to *do* it is the secret of success."

DEVOTION.—"If faith be the main-spring, *devotion* winds up the machinery and keeps it in continual motion. It is as impossible for the soul to remain strong in faith and active in obedience, without continual communion with God, the fountain of all grace, as it is for a clock to perform its revolutions without being regularly wound up."

ECONOMY.—"It may sound strange to some that economy is not so much saving as spending, but it is the *making careful and clever use of the faculties within us and the opportunities without us*. In the science of life and duty perseverance and energy often come to untimely ends because they are not united in fellowship with a wise economy."

DISCIPLINE.—"Discipline, like the bridle in the hand of a good rider, should exercise its influence without appearing to do so; should be ever active both as a support and a restraint, yet seem to lie easily in hand. It must always be ready to check or pull up, as occasion may require, and only when the horse is a runaway should the action of the curb be perceptible."

ENERGY.—"What is wanted to insure success is not so much skill, genius, or even opportunity, as that which is expressed in this word, *Energy*. Spasmodic efforts are common to multitudes and although much strength is on such occasions put forth, it cannot be truly denominated energy. Energy keeps on at the life task whatever may be the disadvantages and whatever the difficulties."

DEVOTEDNESS.—"The patient self-consecration to a chosen department of thought and action exhibited by men of science, both in its higher and lower walks, should put to shame the indolent half-heartedness of many who call themselves messengers of Christ and workers of God. Do we dream of

becoming eminent educators of the young, or even skilled expositors of the most ancient, comprehensive, and momentous of all books by the aid of fragmentary exertion, divided zeal, and *partial devotedness!*"

CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE CURE OF VANITY.—1. That you came from the same place as the beast; that is, from the dust. 2. That you are really not so clever as you seem to be in the eyes of your uniformed admirers, and that you are conscious of being over-estimated and unduly praised. 3. That whatever knowledge you have it is not self-originated, but gathered from those who have gone before. 4. That compared with many others of truly high attainments you are as nothing. 5. That "the glory of man" soon falleth away, and then he turns to corruption. 6. That the advantage (if any) although gained would be of very temporary duration, since it is thought by students of prophecy that the Lord may come before another generation shall arise; in which case there would be no one to sing your praises although your name should appear high on the scroll of the talented and famed. 7. That vanity is displeasing to God and Christ, who dwell only with the lowly minded.

"YOU DON'T PRAY."

The following instructive anecdote, relating to President Finney, is characteristic:

A brother, who had fallen into darkness and discouragement, was staying at the same house with Dr. Finney over night. He was lamenting his condition, and Dr. Finney, after listening to his narrative, turned to him with his peculiar, earnest look, and with a voice that sent a thrill through his soul, said, "*You don't pray!* that is what's the matter with you. Pray—*pray* four times as much as ever you did in your life, and you will come out."

He immediately went down to the parlor, and taking the Bible, he made a serious business of it, stirring up his soul to seek God, as did Daniel, and thus he spent the night. It was not in vain. As the morning dawned he felt the light of the Sun of Righteousness shine upon his soul. His captivity was broken; and ever since he has felt that the greatest difficulty in the way of men being emancipated from their bondage is, that they "don't pray."

TOO MUCH CAUTION.

Dr. Bonar thus corrects the tendency of some people:

A brother minister said one day, "Dr. Duncan, I admitted a man of whom I thought that, if ever there was a converted man, it was he. But he went wrong upon my hands. Now I have another case, of which I think quite as well as the other (but no better), and *I'm afraid to admit him, in case he should turn out like the other.* What say you?"

The answer of Dr. Duncan was as follows:—

"There was once a man called Simon Magus. This man took in Philip the evangelist, who was, no doubt, mortified at being so deceived. Just after this Philip was sent away from Samaria to a desert spot, and there he fell in with an Ethiopian nobleman reading his Bible, as he drove home from keeping Pentecost at Jerusalem. The nobleman asked him to take a seat with him in his chariot, and they got into conversation upon the passage in Isaiah that he had been reading. Philip threw such a flood of light upon it that the nobleman saw the Saviour in it, and longed to be baptized; and on coming to a pool of water, asked what was to hinder it there and then? 'Oh, a great deal, sir; for you see, I am a Scotchman, and was taken in the other day by a

man they call Simon Magus, and you may take me in too! But if you'll come back next year, and I find you of the same mind, I'll admit you!"

SIN PROPAGATING ITSELF.

A man lives a godless life, a life of licentiousness and debauchery, finds his delight for years in the seduction of innocence, in dragging the souls of others into the mire in which he wallows. He afterwards repents. Where are his victims? "One is dead. Another has learned his accursed lessons so that she devotes herself to the work he desires to quit, and has lead and is leading other victims wrong. Can his repentance save the dead, the soul slain by his hand, and now gone to await the final account? Can it recover the other, which is, at second hand, sacrificing new victims to his sin! He may devote his life to the work of recovering what he has ruined, but he *has ruined souls*, and for those his life, were it tenfold more valuable, is no offering. Nay the tears of the murderer cannot give life to the murdered. The repentance of the tempter cannot save the soul that he slew, and sent stained and lost, to its doom. It is one of the shallowness of our modern religionism that it is losing the vision of the horrible meaning of sin; and because it has lost the visions of God's white righteousness which reveals that meaning, men are content with half repentance in consequence. They feed themselves with false hopes, and make poor shammy work of Christian living after a life which has led other souls to destruction. We do not preach a doctrine of despair. But we shall always warn against comforting ourselves with amiable theories, which merely look amiable. This awful burden rests on many a soul,—that it has tempted another soul, or, perhaps, many another soul, to sin, and to con-

sequent ruin. These so tempted and so fallen have again tempted others. The evil goes on working; how far and how wide, the sinner does not know. Only the day of judgment will unfold the awful tale,—only the retributions of eternity will settle the dark account.

Let men take heed to their ways, lest the sinful pleasures of a fleeting hour load them with guilt that no man can measure, and sink them in perditions lowest depths.

BOTH SIDES.

Said John Newton to a friend, "I need not turn Deist, to enjoy the best and most that this life can afford." Newton had a right to say this, and to be believed. He had, as he says, "experienced the good and evil on both sides." He had been a man of pleasure and impiety, and knew how to estimate them. Thus, he says to a friend. "If you were to send me an inventory of your pleasures—how charmingly your time runs on, and how dexterously it is divided between the coffee house, play house, the card table, and tavern, with intervals of balls, concerts, etc., I could answer, that most of these I have tried, and tried again, and know the utmost they can yield, and have seen enough of the rest most heartily to despise them all. You know all that a life of pleasure can give, and I know it likewise." So far they were equal.

But Newton had another experience, found "in the pardon of his sins, communion with God, calm reliance on the divine providence, the cheering prospect of a better life, with foretastes of heaven in his soul." Supposing that such pleasure would be despised, he adds: "But here lies the difference, my dear friend; you condemn that which you have never tried."—*Church Union.*

ART OF READING.

Mr. Anthony Trollope delivered an address lately in London on the "Art of Reading," in which he earnestly recommended his hearers to acquire the art—a never-failing source of enjoyment, but only to be obtained by practice, and not when middle life had come on them. As to what they should read, we would say good books. Above all things, he would advise them not to deceive themselves in their choice. If they could make poetry a delight with them, it had a charm which could not be found in any other literature; but, if poetry were distasteful, there was a world of prose. They must read for amusement, but they need not on that account eschew acquiring information. Instructive books, indeed, were the books to get hold of. Magazine reading, unfortunately, left too little behind it; and, as to novels, they were, of course, novels, and novels, but he did not think that Scott, Thackeray, or Dickens, ever wrote anything impure.

FOR YOUNG LADIES.

Persons at your age, looking off upon life, are apt to think that if, by some stroke of what is called good luck, you could arrive in an elevated and affluent position, a little higher than in that which God has called you to live, you would be very completely happy. Infinite mistake? The palace floor of Ahasurus is red with the blood of Vashti's broken heart. There have been no more scalding tears wept than those which coursed the cheeks of Josephine.

Mere social position will never give happiness to women's soul. I have walked through the halls of those who despise the common people, I have sat at their banquets; I have had their friendship; yea, I have heard from their own lips the story of their disquietude; and I tell the young women

of this Church that they who build on mere social position their soul's immortal happiness, are building on the sand.

The poorest god that a woman every worships is her own face. The saddest sight in all the world is a woman who has built everything on good looks, when the charm begins to vanish.

Culture your heart and you culture your face. The brightest glory that ever beamed from a woman's face is the religion of Jesus Christ. In the last war two hundred wounded soldiers came to Philadelphia in one night, and came unhealed, and they had to extemporize a hospital for them, and the Christian women of my Church, and of other Churches, went out that night, to take care of the poor wounded fellows. That night I saw a Christian woman go through the wards of the hospital, her sleeves rolled up, ready for hard work, her hair dishevelled in the excitement of the hour. Her face was plain, very plain; but after the wounds were washed and the new bandages were put around the splintered limbs, and the exhausted boy fell off into his first pleasant sleep, she put her hand on his brow, and he started in his dream, and said, "O I thought an angel touched me!"

That woman is grandly dressed, and only she, who is wrapped in the robe of a Saviour's righteousness. The home may be very humble, the hat may be very plain, the frock may be very coarse; but the halo of heaven settles in the room where she wears it, and the faintest touch of the resurrection angel will change that garment into raiment exceeding white, so as no fuller on earth could whiten it.

A PLATE of apples was being passed to some children, when a little girl took a large red one. "How greedy you are, to take the biggest!" said a companion; "I meant to have had that myself."

CHILDREN'S TREASURY.

THEY DIDN'T THINK.

Once a trap was baited
 With a piece of cheese ;
 It tickled so a little mouse
 It almost made him sneeze.
 An old rat said, " There's danger ;
 Be careful where you go !"
 " Nonsense !" said the other ;
 " I don't think that you know."
 So he walked in boldly—
 No body in sight ;
 First he took a nibble,
 Then he took a bite.
 Close the trap together
 Snapped, as quick as wink,
 Catching " moussey " fast there,
 'Cause he didn't think !

Once a little turkey,
 Fond of her own way,
 Wouldn't ask the old ones
 Where to go or stray ;
 She said, " I'm not a baby ;
 Here I am half-grown ;
 Surely I am big enough
 To run about alone !"
 Off she went ; but Mr. Fox,
 Hiding, saw her pass ;
 Soon, like snow, her feathers
 Covered all the grass.
 So she was a supper
 Ere the sun did sink,
 'Cause she was so headstrong
 That she wouldn't think !

Once there was a robin
 Lived outside the door,
 Who wanted to go inside
 And hop upon the floor.

"O, no!" said the mother;
 "You must stay here with me;
 Little birds are safest
 Sitting in a tree."
 "I don't care," said Robin,
 And gave his tail a fling;
 "I don't think the old folks
 Know quite everything."
 Down he flew, and kitty seized him
 'Fore he'd time to blink;
 "O," he cried, "I'm sorry,
 But I didn't think!"

Now, my little children,
 You who read this song,
 Don't you see what trouble
 Comes of thinking wrong?
 And can't you take a warning
 From their dreadful fate,
 Who began their thinking
 When it was too late?
 Don't think there's always safety
 Where no danger shows;
 Don't suppose you know more
 Than any body knows.
 But when you're warned of ruin
 Pause upon the brink,
 And don't go over headlong,
 'Cause you didn't think!

JACK AND HIS MEAL BAG.

The mill was doing a great business that day, when Jack and David Jamieson rode up with their bag of corn to be ground. They lived on a small farm five miles off the main road, and were therefore not sorry at the prospect of waiting several hours for their grist. It gave them a chance of seeing something of the liveliness and bustle of "The Corner," as that part of the village was called where the tavern, store, and mill stood. They ran about here and there, and saw and heard a great deal.

At last, a heavy shower coming on,

they went back to the mill to eat their lunch, and see when their turn came. The miller's son and the squire's son were engaged in a brisk talk, which soon took Jack's attention. David went to look after the corn. The miller's son was urging upon the squire's son the importance of finding what truth the Bible enjoined, which the squire's son parries by saying it "was no matter what a man believes, provided he is sincere." The rattling off-hand tone of the young man pleased Jack, and he wished he could talk so. "Wouldn't he silence his grandfather? Yes, that he would. No matter what a man believes, provided he is sincere,"

said Jack to himself, bridling up, and bracing up his conscience against the godly conversation of his relations. "He'd fix 'em now," he said, with a slight nod of his head.

It was not until late in the afternoon that the boy's grist was ready; when the old mare was brought out of the shed, the bag hoisted on her back, and Jack and David both mounted on her—bag, boys, and mare homeward bound. "You've got a longer ride ahead than I wish you had, boys," said the miller, casting his eyes toward a black cloud which was rising and darkening the western sky. "There is plenty of water up there for my mill."

The mare set briskly off, and was soon lost to sight among the windings of the forest road. But the gloom gathered quicker than the horse trotted, and it was quite dark when they reached the fork in the road, where it might make a very considerable difference which path they took home. One was the travelled road. This way there was good bridge over Bounding Brook, a mountain stream, which was often dangerously swelled by the spring rains. It was the safest, though the longest way home. The other was a wood path through the pines, often taken in good weather by the farmers living on the east side of the town, to shorten the distance to the Corner. In this road Bounding Brook was crossed by fording.

"Father told us to be sure and take the travelled road if 'twas late," said David. "Going to," said Jack; and the mare stopped at the fork as if to let the boys be sure which to take. In fact Jack was a little confused. The windings of the road, with nothing but woods on each side, and, of course, no distinct landmarks to govern him; the gloom of the night hiding what objects that might have served to direct him, together with his small acquaintance with the road, did puzzle

the boys, although Jack, being the older of the two, with a dash of pride about him, would not own it. As the mare stopped he came to a conclusion, and whipped up. "All right," he cried,

"Are you sure?" asked David. "This way, I know," answered Jack. "I don't know," said David; let me jump off and run down to that light yonder, and ask: there must be a cabin there, and folks." "Oh, we can't stop for all that," said Jack. "I honestly believe this is the travelled road, David, and that's enough; can't you trust me?" "But your honestly believing it don't make it so," muttered David. "I haven't a doubt of it, Dave; you be still," cried Jack angrily. "I think we ought to ask, so as to be sure," persisted David. But Jack whipped up, and poor David's fears and words went to the winds, as gust after gust of the coming shower roared through the forest, and Jack urged the horse to all the speed which her heavy load would allow, on and on through the dark woods. Jack was well pleased with the correctness of his hasty decision about the way; and the farther he went, the more and more confirmed was he that it was the right way.

Presently the roaring of Bounding Brook arose above the rattlings of the woods. A switch over the mare's haunches, and "we shall be over the bridge in a moment," cried Jack; "then what'll you say?" David privately muttered, "He'd like to feel himself over," when, a few more canthers, and—Jack, David, meal, and mare were floundering in the raging waters of the swollen stream, pitch dark, the storm on them, and miles from human help. The first few moments of horrible suspense it were vain to paint. Jack at last found himself anchored on a log of drift wood, the icy waters breaking over him, and the bridle still fast in his hand. "David!"

he shouted at the top of his voice, "David!" "The Lord have mercy on us," cried David, "I am here."

"No matter what a fellow believes, provided he's sincere," cried poor Jack afterwards, thoroughly humbled. "It's the greatest lie the devil ever got up. It is matter. *Being right* is the main thing. Sincerity don't save a fellow from the tremendous consequences of being wrong—that it don't. Then what's the use of all a man's sincerity?—It can't get him out of the scrape; he's got to *take* it. Didn't I honestly believe I was on the bridge of the travelled road, when I was like going to perdition in the ford of the wood path?" The woful disasters of that night completely and for ever cured poor Jack of a popular error, which has pitched many a poor soul into the wilder surge of unbelief and perdition.

HOW SHOULD LITTLE CHILDREN PRAY.

We may answer this question in the language of some of your own age. A little boy, one of the Sunday school children in Jamaica, called upon the missionary, and stated that he had lately been very ill, and in his sickness often wished his minister had been present to pray with him.

"'But, Thomas,' said the missionary. 'I hope you prayed yourself?'"

"'O yes, sir.'"

"'Did you repeat the words I taught you?'"

"'I prayed.'"

"'Well, but how did you pray?'"

"'Why, sir, I begged.'"

A child of six years old, in a Sunday school, said, "When we kneel down in the school-room to pray, it seems as if my heart talked with God." A little girl, about four years of age, being asked, "Why do you pray to God?" replied, "Because I know He hears me, and I love to pray to Him."

"But how do you know He hears you?" Putting her little hand to her heart, she said, "I know He does, because there is something *here* that tells me so."

Ah, children, you may never fully know the power and usefulness of prayer, until you find yourself in trouble and sorrow; then you will love the Mercy-seat better than any other place on earth. But see to it, that you never approach God in prayer, even now, unless you *have an errand*: for to ask for what you do not want, would only be mocking the great God. Do you remember those little verses of the hymn?

"I often say my prayers,
But do I ever pray?
Or do the wishes of my heart
Suggest the words I say?"

"I may as well kneel down
And worship gods of stone,
As offer to the living God
A prayer of words alone."

—*Episcopal Recorder.*

THE AFRICAN BOY'S JOURNEY.

Far in the heart of Africa there lived a little shepherd-boy. As he was tending his sheep among the hills, he met another shepherd-boy, who had a Testament of his own. This boy read some of it to his little friend; the part he read was the sweet story of the Babe of Bethlehem. How much astonished was the other boy to see a book, and to hear his companion read out of it! He listened with great attention, and believed every word he heard. He longed to see the Babe of Bethlehem—that babe that was wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger.

"Can I see Him?" he eagerly inquired; "tell me, tell me where He is!"

"At the Kuruman (missionary) station," replied the little reader.

"Did you ever see Him?"

"No, I never saw Him; but I know he is there, for they talk to him and sing to Him. I have heard them."

The astonished child made up his mind to go to the Kuruman, and see this babe with his own eyes. It was a long journey—hundreds of miles over a sultry desolate country.

For the greater part of the distance he walked; at last he reached the districts where, scattered among the blacks, a few white farmers cultivate the soil. Glad was he then of an occasional lift in a rude slow-moving waggon, drawn by oxen over hill and valley, through rough forest paths, and over rushing streams.

At length he arrived at Kuruman, one Saturday evening, and was kindly received by a Christian Bechuana woman. He partook of her supper, and slept in her hut.

Next morning he heard the chapel bell. He knew not why it sounded, but he followed his kind hostess to the chapel. He listened with delight to the sweet singing; he looked earnestly at the missionary, when he opened the Bible and prepared to read. And what was the chapter that was read? It was the very chapter about the Babe of Bethlehem—the second of Luke! The little shepherd looked around the chapel, hoping more than ever to see the glorious babe. As he looked, he observed a child such as he had never seen before; a fair child, with light hair and blue eyes. "It is the Babe of Bethlehem," thought the little shepherd-boy; the babe that I longed to see. I have found it at last!"

When the service was over, the delighted boy told his Christian friend that he had seen the Babe of Bethlehem. At first she could not understand what he meant, but soon she found out his mistake. The blue-eyed babe was the Missionary's own child. But then the good woman told him

who the Babe of Bethlehem really was, what He did and where He is. She told him of His love in dying upon the cross, and of His glory at His Father's right hand. The boy believed her words, and soon he loved Jesus, though he could not see Him. He did not wish to leave the Kuruman Station, but stayed there and learned to read his Bible, and he grew up to be a Christian man.—*Juvenile Missionary Herald.*

PICKING BERRIES.

My father was a minister. We lived very plain, but that never troubled us. We always had enough wholesome food to eat, and my mother was one who always contrived to have a neat suit of clothes for each of her children. One day, when I was a little fellow, several little boys and girls came along on their way to pick huckleberries; they invited me to go with them, and when I saw their bright faces and little baskets I wanted to go. So I went into the house and asked my mother. I saw she favored me, but said I must ask my father.

"And where is father?"

"Up in the study, of course."

So up I bounded, hat in hand, and gently knocked at his door. He bade me come in.

"Well, Johnny, what is your wish?"

"I want, sir, to go with the children and pick berries!"

"Where are they going?"

"Only to Johnson's hill, sir."

"How many children are there?"

"Seven besides myself, please let me go."

"Well, you may go. Be a good boy and use no bad words."

Away I scampered, and just got to the bottom of the stairs, when my father called me back.

"Oh, dear, it's all over now. He is going to take it all back," I thought

to myself. Trembling, I again stood in the doorway.

"Johnny," said my father, "I have a word of advice to give you. You will find the berries growing on the bushes, standing in clumps, all over the lot. The children will pick a few minutes at one place and then go off to another, in hopes of finding better picking, and thus they will spend half the afternoon in roaming from one place to another. Now, my advice to you is this: When you find pretty fair picking, stick to that spot and keep picking there. Your basket at night will show whether my advice is good or not."

Well, I followed my father's advice, and though the children would wander about and cry out, "Oh, Johnny, here is a world of them, and here you can fill your basket in less than no time," yet I stuck to my fair picking place. When we got through at night, to the astonishment of every one, and my own no less, it was found that I had nearly twice as many berries as any other one. They all wondered how it was, but I knew; and that was the lesson that made me a rich man. Whenever I have found "pretty fair picking," I have stuck to it.

"THINKING OURSELVES OVER."

"Please tell me, mother, what is self-examination?" said a child; our superintendent said something about it, and he told us to spend a little while every Sunday practicing it—practicing what, mother?"

"Self-examination is thinking ourselves over," said the mother. "You know how apt we are to forget ourselves—what we did and thought yesterday, and the day before, and the day before that. Now it is by calling to mind our past conduct that we can

truly see it as it is, and improve upon it."

Self-forgetfulness is a virtue in the common acceptance of the meaning of the word, but it is not safe for one to forget one's self. A bad man never likes to "think himself over." It is only those who aim at self-improvement who are willing to review the past, and to profit by his lessons. If we would become truly good, and wise, and successful, we must "think ourselves over." Our past mistakes must be corrected, and our lost opportunities redeemed.

FLOWERS.

The other day, Eddie was walking with me in the garden.

"I love the flowers," said he. "Do not you think, mamma, God was real good to make so many kinds?"

"Yes, indeed, my son, and all to please us."

"Why, no, mamma, not all to please us; for don't you think God loves to see the flowers himself?"

I felt ashamed that I hadn't thought of that.

When I have a house all my own," Eddie said, "I mean to have flowers, plenty of flowers plenty of flowers, all around it everywhere; just as God has made his world full of them. world is God's house, isn't it, mamma?"

And we ought to fix up our houses and our yards with pretty flowers, I think, so as to make us think of God all the time, and so as to be like God as much as ever we can."

I like Eddie's thought. "Yes," said I, "everybody that loves God, if he is ever so poor and little, can have a flower to remember the Father by, either in his house, or round the door; and its beauty or sweet perfume will always speak of His love and care."