

THE GLEANER.

"Let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves."—Ruth 2; 7.

Thos. Somerville, Editor. "LET THERE BE LIGHT."

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A WORD OF COMFORT TO GOD'S DEEPLY TRIED ONES.

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them who are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we are comforted of God." 2 Cor. 1: 3, 4.

You have had a history—a history which none but the All-seeing One has fully read—a life, it may be full of events—events deeply trying and sorrowful; or you may have a hidden sorrow, something which you cannot speak of even to your dearest earthly friends, but which has been a life-long grief.—Indeed, the sources of trial and grief are so varied that they cannot be enumerated. But your God and Father knows them all; so that you may truly say, "When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then THOU knewest my path." Psalm 142: 3. As He alone really knows them, how suitable for you to say, "My soul wait *thou* only upon God, for my expectation is from Him." Psalm 62: 5. Then you can say in happy confidence, "When I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me." Micah 7: 8.

He not only looks upon you with tender pity, but He cares for you, and can and will use all that you are passing through for your real and eternal

good, if you truly wait upon Him, and in a spirit of quiet submission bow to all He has in His inscrutable providence permitted to come upon you.—Do so, and victory is yours, and you gain that which is of more real value than all you have lost. Your sorrow will be turned into joy, and this joy none can take from you.

Let the blessed Lord Jesus, who has so loved you, and has washed you from your sins in His own blood, be your strength for the way; yea, the portion, the Beloved of your heart, and the guide of your life during the "little while." Though others may sadly disappoint you, and even prove false, yet He will ever prove true and faithful. In this way your remaining days can be bright, and your end peaceful and joyous; and when you get on the tearless shore, how fully you will be able to say,

"Our Jesus hath done all things well."

O keep near to Him. He loves you with a love far surpassing all other loves put together, and He has all power. He says, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth," Matt. 28: 18; so that He can act out His love to the fullest extent. *Power and love* combine to make you blessed.—Then you may trust Him. O trust Him! Read something of Him in the Bible daily. Tell Him your whole heart. Be true to Him. It is sad that so many of those who profess His name

are so false to Him during His absence, going hand in hand with the world which is an enemy to Him to whom they profess to be espoused! O beloved tried ones, be true to your absent Lord. Thus be practically ready for His coming. Soon the marks of sorrow will disappear, and your joy will be full and forever.

He is a present help *now* in your time of trouble. He will help you *now* in your weakness and daily cares. And to know that you have a happy home awaiting you, you can well bear the inconveniences and sorrows of the way. Soon your night of weeping will be over, and the morning of joy will have come; then

"A day without night, you will live in His sight,

And eternity seem as a day,"

"*Seem* as a day," because it will be so blessed to be there. No tedious hours in that day! Yet the Sun of that day will never go down. And it is all of grace, and through that blessed One, who though rich, became poor, and even endured the cross, that we might thus be rich forever. O begin now, even in your sorrow, to praise God and the Lamb. You will do this forever, and no trace of grief to mar your bliss. Your God is "the God of *all* comfort." Praise Him, praise Him.—DR R. HUTCHINSON.—*The Light Bearer.*

DANIEL'S DELIVERANCE; Or, Faithfulness and its Results.

Never were two more sweeping measures passed by any government than those enforced by Darius the Mede, in the days when he had for prime minister Daniel, the Jewish captive. The first prohibited, for the space of thirty

days, all practice of religion whatsoever. The second not only annulled this, but proclaimed the worship of the true God throughout all the one hundred and twenty provinces of this monarch's mighty dominion. Both were published within the course of a week or so.

But as to these measures, what caused their enactment? What led Darius to preclude every petition saving those addressed directly to himself for that period? Again, why did he so quickly strike his pen through his newly-framed bill? The cause in each case was Daniel.

Now this man had, like Joseph before him, been raised to great eminence in a land wherein he was a stranger.—God raised both for the accomplishment of His purposes and for the help of His people.

Daniel was chief president, and placed in authority over all the councillors of Darius. But this fact made him the victim of jealousy. A Jewish premier was, of course, intolerable to the pride of the Medo-Persian nobles. The result was that they plotted his downfall. But where could they find a fault? His administration was blameless, his life irreproachable. They could only find it in the fact that he had not acknowledged their gods. His religion and theirs differed. Theirs was one of form, and allowed infinite latitude; his was one of conscience, and bound his very being to a principle, the maintenance of which was dearer to him than life. Theirs might be held in abeyance or temporary neglect; his was a matter of as much importance as daily food. Theirs connected them with idols; his sustained him in communion with the living God.

Of all this his artful enemies were

fully aware, and hence their clever device.

They succeeded in obtaining from the unsuspecting king a decree which forbade the presentation of any petition to God or man, except the king for thirty days. To this decree Darius appended his sign-manual. This was his first famous measure. Daniel was hopelessly entangled. Escape even if desired, was impossible, apart from the betrayal of conscience and of God.

He saw the dilemma. He must either deny God, and thus escape the lion's den, or else continue true to God and lose his life. The happy result—one which brought such a revenue of glory to God, and such honor to Daniel—was, that in faith he chose the latter. "Them that honor Me I will honor" was fully proved by this dear faithful man.

Meanwhile he was to make no petition to God for thirty days. Such was the clear command of Darius. Obedience was impossible. He must obey God rather than man. And so at all risks, without reserve, and most boldly he prays "as aforetime." He flings open his window, in order that he may be seen by his enemies, and with his face toward Jerusalem—that earthly centre of divine interest, though now in ruins—he cries to God. Jerusalem was more to him than Babylon, and God more than Darius. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith," and a praying Daniel was a victor.

Yet to his foes such conduct must have appeared folly. Think of petitioning an unseen God; think of turning toward Jerusalem whilst so doing—a ruin which bore witness to the wrath of that God on His people; and

think of disobeying the king's decree. However, folly or wisdom, they had gained their end, and had entrapped Daniel. They could now prove a charge of disobedience, and claim for him the punishment of the law.

Accordingly we find them at once preferring their charge, and telling the king of "that Daniel," a Jewish captive, who did not regard the king nor his decree, but who made thrice daily his petition. How skillfully had they framed their indictment! Here was a man who neither regarded the king nor his decree. Was this a fair presentation of the facts? Farther, thrice daily he made his petition. True; but to whom? They did not say. How could they utter the name of the unseen God, in whose awful presence Daniel found his strength and comfort? Yet the indictment was complete, and Daniel's ways had a semblance of disregard for the king. A way of escape was impossible.

And now Darius discovers, when too late, the faultiness of his measure; and in order to deliver his favorite minister he labors till sundown, but in vain.—His was the labor of mercy against the iron chains of justice, of love against law. Evidently both could not stand. If he delivered Daniel, he broke the law, and dissolved the bonds of his empire; if, on the other hand, he fulfilled the law he must shock all his feelings of mercy and compassion.—There was no alternative. Hence his long and futile labor. Justice barred benevolence and demanded satisfaction. She refused the smallest violation, and urged by the law of the Medes and Persians, by the very pillars that support the universe, the priority of her cause. And she prevailed. She must prevail.

Oh, that problem to the brain of man so insoluble! How can mercy find scope for acting without infringing the rules of justice? What infidel can answer such a question? or what system of philosophy explain its riddle? But God has explained the whole in one single sentence, "That He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Rom. iii. 26. And the cross of Christ stands before the world as the divine answer; for there justice, finding perfect satisfaction in the death of the Son of God, permits mercy to extend all the riches of her bosom toward the guilty; and thus the two, working hand in hand, carry the blessing in love, and secure it in righteousness, on behalf of all who believe in Jesus.

Oh, grand solution of our problem, to be admired through the eternal day as the triumph, not only of God's grace, but of His wisdom too!

Well, the law of the Mede must have its way, and Daniel suffers its full penalty. He is cast into the den of lions. The law demands no more. The curtain drops, and night falls over the scene. But the king cannot sleep, nor do the sweet strains of music charm him. His soul is troubled on Daniel's account. And so early morning finds him at the mouth of the den crying lamentably to Daniel, whom he calls the servant of the living God, in order to learn whether God were able to deliver him from the lions.

"O king, live for ever," sounded loyally and joyfully from the lips of the man of God. "My God," said he, using the possessive pronoun by a renewed right and title, sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths." Yes, God was able to deliver, and had done so.

Then was the king exceeding glad for him. . . . So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, *because he believed in his God.*" Happy testimony! Daniel honored God, and God honoured Daniel.

No hurt befell his three friends in the burning fiery furnace. They had refused to worship the image. No hurt befell Daniel. He had refused to cease worshipping God. Their conduct was negative; his was positive. They said "no," he said, "yes." Both responded by grace. And faith, like a golden coin, has two sides, the negative that refuses evil, and the positive that chooses good. Thus Moses refused Egypt, and chose to suffer affliction with the people of God. It is the nature of faith to cease doing evil and to learn to do well.

"Then king Darius wrote unto all people, nations and languages, that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied unto you. I make a decree, that in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for He is the *living God*, and steadfast forever."

This was the second measure. It wiped the first out of existence. It established, so far as a human decree could do it, a religion that acknowledged the *living God*, before whom men were to tremble and fear, and it was published in every realm of his wide domain.

Just think, dear reader, that this was the effect of the faith and devotedness of one man. Think of the glory that redounded to God through him. Daniel loved God, loved his interests, loved his people, loved his poor desolate city; and therefore, at all risk,

and at all cost, he clung to Him. The ordeal was terrible, but the grace given victory was glorious!

"The God of Daniel" is a title that now shines on the page of inspiration as does that of "the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob." Happy Daniel! Oh for grace to cleave with purpose of heart to the Lord, and to continue in prayer to God, as our hearts turn in true sympathy to the moral wastes of Zion, and await the coming of the great Deliverer—the Son of the living God.—J. W. S.

DEATH.

If ever it becomes us to be still, and know that the Lord is God, and to give patient and earnest attention to the voice of His holy providence, it is when He comes near us in the sad and solemn visitation of death. It is a very sacred season to the whole family, when one of their number lies dead in the house.

God, is there, speaking to them from the marble face and the silent lips which were so lately full of life. It should be their chief concern to understand and improve the lesson which the great preacher, death is sent to preach to them. God has a gracious meaning and purpose, in His most afflictive dispensations, for the instruction of His children, and they should never let the world come in, with its forms and fashions, to divert their attention from their Father's voice.

The world is proud and pretentious even in its grief. It would set up its exacting claims, and enforce its capricious laws, and dictate the garb and expression of sorrow in the midst of of the family, occupying the heart

with these things, when a voice speaks to them from the bed of death, and the open grave and the disclosed realities of judgment and eternity.

Let those who believe in Jesus, behave themselves under affliction, as if He Himself had come to the house, and had sat down quietly by their side to comfort them, and to teach them the great lesson of submission and faith.—We need not be afraid to pour out all our sorrows before Him, for He Himself is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. In the days of His flesh, He expressed the anguish of His own heart with strong crying and many tears. When He saw others weeping around Him at Bethany, He Himself wept and groaned in spirit and was troubled. To such a Friend we may surely tell all our grief. But if we would receive such consolation as He alone can give, we must not let the world come in and weary our hearts with its studied form, and parade, and drapery of woe.—M.

When disaster and defeat have befallen us, and our wisest plans and noblest purposes are defeated, it does not become us to mourn and despair, as if all were lost. We must all find much in the past to regret. And he often sees most to regret, who has been most in earnest to improve his time well. But it is by mistakes and failures that the conscientious learn, and the diligent improve. Defeat in a single battle is often the condition of success in the whole campaign. The apparent withholding of the divine blessing for a season, prepares for a more abundant harvest in the end.

With multitudes the memory of the past is strewn all the way with bitter

regret. If only something different had been done, from what has been done, then they suppose the present would be all peace and the future all hope. So they fondly dream, not considering that what they most regret in the past may have been sent in mercy, or may yet be improved so as to be the occasion of endless joy in the future.

" IN FIVE MINUTES. "

A few months ago, at the request of an aged man, I went to see a little girl who lay at the point of death. Though she suffered very much, she was quite happy and delighted to look forward to the time when the Lord Jesus would call her to Himself.

" Yes, mother," she would say, " I shall soon go to Jesus ; but you and father must come too ; you have only to love the Lord Jesus Christ, and then you will meet me in heaven. "

Shortly before her death she raised her hand, and said, counting, " One, two, three, four, five—in about five minutes I think I shall be with Jesus. "

She lay quite still for a few minutes, and then joyfully exclaimed, " O mother, Jesus has opened the gates of heaven for me, and His angels are beckoning me to come ? And thus, without a sign of fear, the child entered the presence of the Saviour she loved so well. "

How would it be with you reader, if you had only five minutes to live ?—Would you, like this little girl, long to be with Jesus, or would you say, " I am not ready to die ? " Do not, I beseech you, put off your soul's salvation any longer, but come to the Saviour just as you are, knowing He is waiting to receive you.

" MY YOKE IS EASY. "

It is plain, men may be busy for God, with all along a grudge in the heart against God. Their blank and cheerless lives, spite of all that they can do, witness against them ; but they would fling the accusation against God. Their hearts are not with Him. They have " friends " to whom they turn to find what with Him they cannot. They take outwardly His yoke, but they do not find it easy : there is no fulfillment of that, " Ye shall find rest to your souls. "

Who is in fault ? How vain to think that God is ! How impossible to find aught but perfection in the Holy One ! Do that, and indeed you will stop all the harps of heaven, darken its blessed light, and bring in disaster and ruin everywhere. There is no fear : He will be justified in His sayings, and overcome when He is judged. But it is an old contention, and a frequent one, " Wilt thou also disannul My judgment ? wilt thou condemn Me that thou mayest be righteous ? " Ah, we must do that, or submit to that judgment of God ourselves ; for it is recorded as to us, " There is none righteous—no, not one, " and " what things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped and all the world become guilty before God. "

To take this place is repentance, and then we are Pharisees no longer. We need grace, and thus we come to understand it. We understand it, and so appreciate it. We find it in God, and thus turn to Him. How sweet is then His voice ! and how the spring of joy begins to bubble up in the soul ! Repentance and faith are never separate, and the tear of penitence is the dew of

the Spirit, that already sparkles in the morning brightness—fuller of joy itself than all the pleasures of sin can make one for a moment!—F. W. GRANT *in God's Evangel.*

TO MOTHERS AND FATHERS.

A loved friend said to us, "write of iceberg fathers and passionate mothers." What is an "iceberg father?" A man who repels instead of winning the confidence of his children, who darkens the household with his frown, whose gloomy countenance and austere ways cause the children to tremble instead of to leap for joy. "Iceberg fathers" need a thorough breaking down—a pounding to pieces. "Iceberg fathers" need to come in closer touch with Christ, and allow the fervour of *His* love to thaw their hard and cold nature; they should cultivate the genial side of Christianity and learn *in heart* the meaning of these words, "Rejoice in the Lord *alway*." It is truly terrible the havoc wrought by an "iceberg father." He scatters hoar-frost all around.

Need you be surprised that children seek happiness elsewhere than in the family circle? The house should be a scene of gladness and sunshine; and that father is verily guilty who is indifferent to the every-day interests of his children. From a long and extended intercourse with the young, we are satisfied that fathers in general are not sufficiently alive to the importance of winning the confidence of their children. How often when urging young people to tell father about a special difficulty we have been consulted about, the remark has been made, "O, no, I *could* not tell father," or, "I *dare* not tell father."

We want a race of Christian fathers who are prepared to act towards their children in the spirit and letter of Eph. vi. 4, and Col. iii. 21, and we venture to say that the result would be a larger number of happy households and fewer shipwrecks amongst our sons and our daughters.

O fathers! fathers! a solemn and heavy responsibility rests upon your shoulders. As a husband the care and happiness of your wife is in your hands; while, as a father, the well-being of your children is largely dependent on you. What a weighty trust God has committed to your care!

Do not keep the children at a distance. Do not be too severe. Identify yourself with their pleasures, games, trials, difficulties, joys, and fears. Interest yourself in their companions, pursuits, and books, and so brighten the home that each member of the household can truthfully sing, "Home, home, sweet home! there's no placelike home." Why be surprised that your children prefer roaming the streets with companion, and frequenting even questionable places of amusement. Children and young people generally, seek for happiness—and why should they not? if it is unknown at home, they will seek it elsewhere. If father is rarely at home, finding his pleasure in meetings, to the neglect of his family, he need not be surprised if they also, in the quest for pleasure, suitable to their tastes, desert the household; or if father's voice is rarely if ever heard in prayer in the family circle, and the Word of God seldom read or referred to, why consider it a strange matter for the children to follow the bent of their minds? If father fills the house with gloom and frown, and severity the chil-

dren will seek to bask 'neath the sun, if it does shine outside the home.

Mothers—"Pasionate mothers" who scold and whip on the slightest pretext—whose passion warps their judgment, who vent their anger on the helpless ones committed by God to their care! "Pasionate mothers!" What an anomaly! but we know such, ruling by instilling fear of punishment into the minds of their children. "Mother loves us so much and would be so grieved by our doing wrong," should be motive and power in deterring from evil, and not the fear of punishment, this latter ever leads to lying and deceit so as to escape it.

There are indolent mothers who never enforce a command, who never insist on prompt obedience, because of the trouble it would give them; they call it *love*; we call it *selfishness*.—Mothers rouse yourselves; there is a grand work to do. "The mother in her office holds the key of the soul."—The babe in your arms, or toddling at your side may yet play an important part in the world's history, or in the Church of God. The mother who has given being to her child, is much more fitted to impart moral tone and feeling than the father. The power of moulding the plastic material whose first impressions of good ever remain is no light matter. Bend the sapling when it is young, "for character groweth day by day and all things aid it in unfolding; and the bent unto good or evil may be given in the hours of infancy." To train the mind to think, and the heart to feel, and fire the soul with high and holy aspirations after God, and what is good, is work not beneath the dignity of angels.

Mother, your babe with its winsome

ways has a future before it. We refer not to its eternal future, but to its place in the Church and in the world. The seeds of coming usefulness are being sown now. That child may be destined to guide and direct thousands in the way of peace, or lead in public opinion. See to it, therefore, that from its infantile days, its very earliest impressions be those of truth, honor, purity, and all that is good. You impart character; and thus exercise a far-reaching influence for good or evil.

To both fathers and mothers, we say ever insist on implicit obedience. See that you are obeyed. On no account relax this fundamental rule in guiding the household. But do not indulge in the habit of threatening, of continual fault-finding, listening to tales of one against another, of making pets. Fathers in general are too severe, and mothers too indulgent. Extremes on either side should be carefully guarded against and both parents cordially associate in training the children—the one supplying what the other lacks. It is in the home circle and under parental tuition that character is indelibly fixed, and life-long habits acquired. Where the home atmosphere is morally poisonous; where the seeds of evil are sown on soft and impressionable hearts, you need not be surprised at after results. What you sow you reap. Like begets like. Self-willed children unchecked are unhappy; they are a nuisance in any and every company. But who are blameable? the parents. Poor things! ill trained, badly behaved children are to be pitied, and the parents severely blamed.

While both parents are jointly responsible for the training of the children in the ways of God, yet special

accountability rests on fathers. The Holy Ghost thus addresses them, "Ye fathers provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Eph. vi. 4. Christian fathers are the divinely appointed priests and instructors of the Household.—WALTER SCOTT.—*Believers' Almanac*.

REFUGES OF LIES.

What is the use of reasoning about Universalism? Look at the facts!—They alone are sufficient to show its utter falsehood. Universalism never saved any man from sin. It throws no influence in that direction. So of Mormonism and all similar delusions. We need not stop to write books against this and such like lies—it stands out on the fore front of this system that it saves no man from sin. It is therefore a refuge of lies—deceiving men into hopes that can never be realized. So of every creed and system that does not save men from sin and fit them for heaven.

God declares, that "The hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies and the waters shall overflow the hiding place." No doubt this hail is the symbol of God's displeasure. It is fit that God should be displeased with these refuges of lies. He loves truth too well to have any sympathy with lies. He loves the souls of men too deeply to have any patience with agencies so destructive. Therefore, He loathes all these refuges of lies, and has solemnly declared that the hail shall sweep them all away.

The waters, He declares, shall overflow the hiding place. All religious affectation is such, and is nothing but

ter. To put on the mere appearance of devoutness and sanctimony, as if God could be made to believe you sincere and could not see through it all. This is a flimsy hiding-place indeed.—So of all religious formality—going through the forms of worship, being a church member, being baptized—what avails it all unless their piety is instinct with life and that life be the soul of real holiness?

A great many people hide in their church. A minister in the Dutch Reformed Church told me once of a case in point. A man who had been confirmed in that church was out at sea in a fearful storm. It was a time of intense alarm, and many were exceedingly fearful of death, also of that terrible state beyond. When they asked him, How is it that you are so cool? He replied, "What have I to fear—I belong to the South Dutch!"

Many hide under orthodox creeds. They are not Unitarians; they are not Mormons; they are not Universalists; they are orthodox! Such religious opinions held so tenaciously must, they think, ensure their safety.

Others hide under the plea of a sinful nature. They are naturally unable to do anything. Here they think they have found a sure retreat. They are very willing to do all their duty; but this sinful nature is all against them, and what can they do? This is a refuge of lies.

Some dodge under professors of religion. Alas, their hiding place will fail in the day of trial! When the hail comes and the storm rolls up fearfully, and the awful thunder breaks with appalling crash, you will try in vain to find your professor—to hide under his wing! Where is he now?

Suppose he were as bad as you claim, how much can he help you in that all devouring storm? If he is not as good as he should be, you ought to be better than he, and not try to hide yourself under his shortcomings.

That and that only which saves from sin is true; all else is false and ruinous. Is your hope of a happy future good or bad? Is it truthful and sure or a refuge of lies?

Does your hope sanctify you—does it make you humble, holy, prayerful? Does your faith purify your heart?—Have you the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering? Have you daily communion with God? Are you so united to Him that you can say—Truly we have fellowship with the Father? If so, this will be a hiding place indeed—not one which the hail shall sweep away, but one which shall lead on to the eternal glory.

Have you the life of God in your soul? Does it pervade your heart and diffuse itself over all the chambers of your soul? Let nothing less than this avail to satisfy your mind.—C. G. F.

DO YOU CARE FOR SOULS?

Do we half realize the awful future which awaits the majority of those around us? Do we ever think that some of our acquaintances, with whom we smilingly exchange the civilities of society, will ere long awake in hell? that many we daily meet in business, will shortly find their portion in the lake of fire? I ask, do we realize this?

And do these thoughts, added to an intense desire for their salvation, nerve us to brave their vulgar ridicule, or polite contempt, and speak with affectionate importunity of the ark of safety in the Christ of God?

Oh, brethren, let us be up and doing! This is no time for idleness. The time is short; eternity with silent tread draws daily nearer; the harvest is almost past, the summer is almost ended, and many, many souls are still unsaved.

Let us take heed how we hinder others more earnest than ourselves.—They are enthusiastic perhaps; they may be precipitate at times; but they are filled with a burning love for souls. All hail to such men! May their zeal increase yet more. May their dauntless energy be divinely blest. They will grow cooler, say some. They may if they leave their first love; but who dare quench the flame that God Himself has kindled?

Would that our prayers for the gospel, both public and private, were energized by this consuming zeal. They might be less finished, they would be less studied, but they would ring with no uncertain sound, and would tell to a listening God that *we really cared for souls.*

AMONG THE HEATHEN.

“When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.” Ezekiel iii. 18, 19.

We shall do well to ask ourselves what the Lord would have learn from this passage of His word. If it applies to us in its plain literal meaning, a tremendous responsibility lies at our doors,

which will require a life-long endeavour to discharge.

We are all aware that vast multitudes of immortal souls pass into eternity every year without ever having heard the gospel; that thousands of our fellow creatures live and die, neglected and uncared for, in ignorance and moral darkness, to whom the light of life has never been carried. We all know this; but does it in any way disturb the quiet serenity of our lives? or make us willing to make some little self-sacrifice to give to others what we so highly value for ourselves?

The prevailing indifference as to whether the heathen hear the gospel or not is sorrowful to witness. Too often they might complain with the psalmist, "No man cared for my soul."

This is a matter which deserves our earnest and prayerful consideration.—We would affectionately ask the reader this question, Are you in sympathy with the Lord's mind about the evangelization of the heathen?

"They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word." Surely a hearty desire to carry out the purposes of God ought to be as potent in arousing Christians as "a great persecution against the Church" was in the apostles' time to a similar end.

Reader, do you realize how very dark are those "dark places of the earth" where the "Light of the world" is still unknown? And have you thought what joy and light and happiness would replace the darkness were the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God taken there? How the bitterness of sorrow and the sting of death would yield to the power of that Almighty Name!

Where, we ask, is our zeal for the Lord's glory, if we leave the enemy in

undisputed possession of these lands? We read of adventurers of by-gone days who sought out far distant lands and, unfurling their national flag, took possession in the name of their king and country; may we not do as much for Christ? Shall their not be a witness for Him in every land and every city—one voice to raise the cry, "Jehovah-nissi!" Exodus xvii. 15.

What is called the "romance of missions" it is the lot of few to meet with; but we have abundant evidence that persevering and prayerful witnesses are wanted all over the world. In many parts of Africa, China, Brazil, and the western coast of South America the gospel has never been preached. No wonder, when missionaries visited similar places, the simple minded natives were unable to understand how it was they had never thought it worth their while to bring them such good news before!

Many shrink from leaving the Christian ministry and fellowship to which they are accustomed, fearing that they will suffer in their own souls by losing the advantages of intercourse with others more advanced than themselves. We all know what profit is found in the society of those well taught in the word, and the prospect of losing all this would be a serious consideration to many. Yet in this their loss would be others' gain. They would unavoidably miss much of the valuable teaching which they at present enjoy, but far from anticipating spiritual shipwreck in consequence, we have no doubt whatever that, if divinely called, they would be divinely kept.

This leads us to another aspect of the subject. Knowing the special trials our missionary brethren meet with,

and that but seldom they have the advantage of warning or encouragement from fellow-believers, are we found often in prayer for them, that, fighting as they do in the front of the battle, they may be preserved both from the might and the wiles of the enemy?—Few things can be more cheering to the lonely witness for Christ than the assurance of having the fellowship in prayer of the saints at home.

It is said a soldier dies a glorious death when he falls in front of battle fighting for his king and country; but what shall we say of these intrepid men who, for the cause they held dearer than life, and for the King of kings, whose message of peace they carried, have fallen victims to famine, pestilence and sword—who, uncheered by loving aid and Christian sympathy, have laid down their lives for the truth?

Though little known, and soon forgotten by man, the names and services of these humble heroes have a lasting fragrance for God, and each lonely grave—unmarked by man and untended by human care—is seen by Him whose “eyes run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in behalf of those whose hearts are perfect toward Him,” and who notes as the last resting-place of a devoted witness, “faithful unto death.”

Reasons against are about as easy to find as reasons for in most things, and Christian missions are no exception.—Perhaps we know of some earnest Christian whose missionary endeavours have been a failure, and who has returned, broken in health and spirit, only to confess he ought never to have left his native land. We may be instructed but not guided by the experience of others; and we should never forget

that, whether we go to preach in China or the next town, we need to be sent of the Lord if we would count on His blessing.

Some say it is no use going where the Lord is not working. Can those who raise this objection point to any spot in the habitable earth where there is no work to be done for Christ?

The people won't have the gospel, I am told. Then do as Moffat did, preach and pray until they will, and may be you will gain as rich a reward as he.—Surely the first missionaries to the South Seas might complain that there was no open door when, after sixteen years' preaching they knew of no result; yet a wave of extraordinary blessing has since crowned their efforts, and at the present time there are about one hundred thousand converts in the Pacific islands.

If you find the door shut, wait on in faith until God opens it. Many who once said, “I wait for the Lord,” have proved the truth of His words, “They shall not be ashamed that wait for Me.”

In Matt. ix. 38, we read what the Lord would have us doing, “Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest.” May we be found with this petition constantly on our lips, and in our hearts, if He should lead, to respond to the question, “Whom shall I send?” “Here am I, send me.”—Simple Testimony.

There is no Scriptural ground for supposing that the punishment of the wicked is less than eternal. Men prophesy smoother things, but the Word of God abides, and it teaches that the punishment of the wicked, as the blessedness of the saved, is forever and ever.